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ABSTRACT

This document, a two-volume report, provides in volume 1 the final longitudinal evaluation of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative (DPI), 1985-86 through 1987-88. (The second volume comprises appendices containing summaries of each previous evaluation for this time period.) The DPI was implemented in 13 high schools and 29 feeder middle schools to stimulate systemic interventions in the high schools and experiment with the use of community-based organizations (CBOs) at both levels. The program targeted a yearly average of 4,335 middle school students and 5,510 high school students with high absenteeism, course failure, and/or a principal's recommendation that they were at-risk. The following services were provided: (1) program facilitation; (2) attendance outreach; (3) guidance and counseling; (4) health services; (5) linkages between middle and high schools; (6) alternative education programs; and (7) increased school security. Overall, the DPI did not improve attendance or the number of courses passed, and probably did not reduce the number of dropouts. Furthermore, there were no consistent differences found between outcomes for students in schools served by CBOs and those served by other staff. The total program cost $40 million, and the average cost per student for one year was over $1,000 in the middle schools and over $1,500 in the high schools. Recommendations for improvement emphasize a comprehensive restructuring of the school experience. Statistical data are included on 38 tables and 35 graphs. (FMW)

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EVALUATION OF THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

1985-86 THROUGH 1987-88

FINAL LONGITUDINAL REPORT

VOLUME ONE

by

Joseph C. Grannis, Project Director
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and

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Additional text for

EVALUATION OF THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

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FINAL LONGITUDINAL REPORT

Executive Summary

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.....for all students who wish to pursue these options. The governing aim at all levels of intervention should be to increase students' engagement in their education.

Schools' resources need to be augmented....planning and delivery of programs and services.

Further efforts are needed to increase communication and collaborative action across formal and informal organizational and cultural boundaries--the spheres of health and education, middle school and high school, home and school, school and CBO, different units of the school like the Guidance and Attendance offices, and different groups like the LEP and English dominant populations of the schools.

Chapter Five

FINAL SUMMARY OF THE DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE EVALUATION

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....new practices in the schools.

The most effective dropout prevention programs will be built around a comprehensive restructuring of the school experience. Most of the intermediate and junior high schools of New York City bear little resemblance, in organization, curriculum, or social climate, to what the term "middle schools" stands for in educational discussions today. In the high schools, the GED has so far been a more efficient way for targeted students to achieve a diploma than the conventional school route. The schools should combine flexibly scheduled experience-based courses and courses preparing students for GED programs and examinations, with part-time employment and apropriate academic and social supports, for all students who wish to pursue these options.

The governing aim of interventions at all levels should be to increase students' engagement in their education. Attendance, involvement in classes, participation in co-curricular activities, career exploration, and health maintenance are all important aspects of students' engagement. Several substudies of the evaluation found that both student engagement and staff engagement were associated with mutual respect, shared control, and overlapping activity--between staff and student and between principal and staff. Respect, control, and activity all need to be considered in promoting engagement.

Certain of the evaluation's recommendations....

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....reflected in the current Corridor School planning.

Data from the evaluation show that services fell short of program expectations most conspicuously in areas that required crossing organizational boundaries: health, which needed coordination between the Board of Education and the Department of Health, and school linkage, requiring collaboration between the middle schools and the high schools, at both the central and the borough and district levels. Formal and informal boundaries were both involved in observed low levels of parental participation, services to LEP students, collaboration between schools and CBOs, and indeed coordination between units within the schools themselves, for example the Guidance and the Attendance offices, or DPI and non-DPI school staff. Conversely, some interventions by the Office of Student Progress and the Office for Dropout Prevention, and in individual schools, did cross over these boundaries. Further attention has to be given to increasing communication and collaborative action across formal and informal organizational and cultural boundaries.

It has become increasingly apparent....

EVALUATION OF THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE
1985-86 THROUGH 1987-88
FINAL LONGITUDINAL REPORT

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Executive Summary

The Dropout Prevention Initiative (DPI) was implemented in 1985-1986 in thirteen high schools and twenty-nine feeder middle schools in the New York City public school system. The DPI was created to go beyond the parallel Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention Program (AIDP, which began a year earlier in a larger and mostly different set of schools), by stimulating systemic interventions in the high schools and experimenting more broadly with the use of community based organizations (CBOs) at both the middle school and the high school level. Teachers College has evaluated the DPI in its first three years of operation, 1985-86, 1986-87, and 1987-88.

Targeted students

Criteria of program eligibility for students included high prior absences, course failures, and/or a principal's recommendation that a student was at risk. The DPI targeted a yearly average of 4335 students in the middle schools and a yearly average of 5510 students in the high schools. At the high school level particularly, the number of students who were eligible for the program but *not* targeted for services was greater than the number who were included in the program.

About one third of the targeted middle school students were in the seventh grade, one half were in the eighth grade, and one fifth were in the ninth grade; nearly half of these students were overage for grade, including a sixth or more who were at least two years overage for grade. In the high schools, over three quarters of the targeted students were in the ninth and the tenth grades, while the smallest proportion were in the twelfth grade; at least three-quarters of the program students were one or more years overage for grade, and half of the students were at least two years overage.

Program services

The DPI was meant to combine seven components of service to students: program facilitation, attendance outreach, guidance and counseling, health services, linkage between middle school and high school, alternative educational programs, and in ten of the high schools, increased school security. At both the middle school and high school level, a majority of the targeted students were included in attendance outreach, guidance and counseling, and alternative education, while parent counseling, health services, and school linkage were recorded for very few students. Altogether, the average student did not receive the full complement of services that the program rationale called for.

Alternative education in the middle schools emphasized career education and remedial instruction, but these were add-ons that did not transform the students' core classroom experience. In the high schools, blocked programming, mini-schools, and a PM School did attempt to create more complete alternatives, but these for the most part could not be isolated from a larger school environment that had negative effects on students.

The DPI fostered the development of several innovations in the high schools, notably the PM School, a Jobs Program, and a peer-mediated conflict-resolution program. An initial focus on comparing systemic distribution of services with case management distribution of services broadened into an interest in systemic reform of the schools more generally. However, the "services" framework of the program, oriented to students' deficiencies or needs more than to the strengths and deficiencies of the schools, became increasingly inadequate to carry this larger mission of systemic change. From this point of view, the DPI could be viewed as a forerunner of the more general current shift toward school-based planning for dropout prevention.

Extensive interviewing and observation in the attendance offices of eleven of the high schools showed that an enormous effort was being expended in the face of many obstacles to reach absent students. However, in most schools there was no formal mechanism to know who the targeted students were and there were grave failures of communication between attendance office personnel, other staff of the school, and CBO staff. Attendance outreach was at one and the same time recognized to be important but not well integrated in the work of the school.

CBO involvement

Four community based organizations worked in eleven of the middle schools for all three years. An analysis of the distribution of recorded services showed that staff in the CBO and non-CBO middle schools alike tended to give more services to students who could be accessed through classes in which targeted students were clustered, which in the year examined excluded many students with low attendance. However, a study in a sample of the middle schools found that a school's being under contract to a local CBO rather than a CBO from outside the community school district was associated with higher student satisfaction with the program and more positive staff perceptions of CBO relationships with other school staff, students, and parents.

Ten CBOs each worked in one of six high schools. Victim Services Agency implemented Project S.M.A.R.T. in five high schools. And Federated Employment Guidance Services (FEGS) implemented Operation Success (OS) in seven high schools. Most of the CBOs built their programs around guidance and counseling. S.M.A.R.T. emphasized conflict resolution and OS added job training and GED (General Equivalency Diploma) preparation to counseling.

Student outcomes

Overall, the Dropout Prevention Initiative did not substantially improve students' attendance or courses passed and probably did not reduce students' dropping out from the schools.

In the middle schools, the Chancellor's goal for attendance improvement was nearly met in 1986-87 and a more limited goal for courses passed improvement was met in all three years. However, the improvements still yielded an average attendance rate of 75% or fewer days present each program year and a 73% or lower courses passed rate. These were not enough to alter the average targeted middle school student's prospects for completing high school. Targeted students' attendance declined substantially in the year following their initial year in the program, especially if they were entering high school.

In the high schools, attendance declined to 64% or less and courses passed rates declined to 42% or less, for the average student during each program year. The dropout discharge rate was lower for high school students during the year in which they were targeted for services than it was for comparison students, but it appears that over half of the students who were targeted for services are likely to be discharged as dropouts, while less than a fourth, at most, will attain a high school diploma or the GED.

These findings did vary from one school to another. Three middle schools that had the most consistent, albeit modest, attendance gains over the last two program years changed the specific configuration of their program from one year to another, but used a combination of goal-oriented management, problem solving, and creativity to link instruction to student support services. Two high schools that had relatively strong gains in courses passed, both of them in the AIDP model and affiliated with FEGS, integrated support services with GED preparation and career-oriented curriculum for students. One of these schools was the first in New York City to have a New York State approved GED program and accounted for one third of the 843 GEDs earned by DPI students during the three years evaluated.

There were no consistent differences between outcomes for students in middle schools that employed CBO staff and middle schools that used Board of Education staff only. In the high schools, students who were served by a combination of school and CBO staff tended to have somewhat better attendance and courses passed outcomes than students who were served only by school staff or only by CBO staff.

The high schools with the strongest overall gains in student attendance and/or courses passed all involved Operation Success. OS was also employed, however, in schools in which students had substantial losses in attendance or courses passed. The effectiveness of CBOs, as of virtually all DPI units, varied as a function of the students they were serving, the school context in which they operated, and their own organization, including CBO site management and staff stability or turnover.

The number of suspensions based on "aggressive acts against students" was substantially reduced in schools that utilized Project S.M.A.R.T. S.M.A.R.T. was consistently praised by school staff for its positive approach to conflict in school.

Outcomes varied for students with different characteristics. At both the middle school and the high school level, male and female students' attendance was similar, but males passed courses at a lower rate than females. Students' attendance and courses passed rates were lower in proportion to their years overage for grade. These results seemed to reflect not just the student characteristics themselves but the schools' interactions with different kinds of students. The evaluation found that middle-school targeted students attended school the greatest percent of days in September and then for decreasing percents through most of the subsequent months, suggesting that it is something wrong with school, not just problems at home, that accounts for students' declining school attendance.

High school students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) passed courses at a *higher* rate than non-LEP students, and at both the middle school and the high school level the LEP students had stronger gains in courses passed than either students with marginal English proficiency or students regarded as proficient in English. Most of these findings applied to both Hispanic and non-Hispanic targeted students.

The positive results for LEP students compared to marginally English proficient students (students scoring between 21 and 39 on the LAB, or who had taken another test in an alternative language) demonstrated the value of bilingual or ESL education, but more generally showed the importance of making linguistically and culturally appropriate adapations to students. A special study of the Hispanic students in the DPI found that Hispanic status as such did not affect services or outcomes as strongly as did relative English proficiency. In both the middle schools and the high schools, LEP students received the fewest DPI services. The study also concluded that career education and educational planning might be particularly crucial for Hispanic students.

Cost

The total cost of the DPI in its first three years was over $40 million. The average cost per student for one year was over $1000 in the middle schools and was over $1500 in the high schools. CBO costs accounted for about 30% of the middle school expenditures and about 50% of the high school expenditures.

Recommendations

The Board of Education responded to earlier recommendations of the evaluation in its request for dropout prevention proposals for 1989-90 that emphasized collaboration between the program and ongoing buildingwide activities, flexible scheduling and creative instructional programming, programs to integrate the target population with other students in the school, multicultural approaches, parent involvement, and staff development.

The most effective dropout prevention programs will be built around a comprehensive restructuring of the school experience. Most of the intermediate and junior high schools of New York City bear little resemblance, in organization, curriculum, or social climate, to what the term "middle schools" stands for in educational discussions today. In the high schools, the GED has so far been a more efficient way for targeted students to achieve a diploma than the conventional school route. The schools should combine flexibly scheduled experience-based courses and courses preparing students for GED programs and examinations, with part-time employment and appropriate academic and social supports, for all students who wish to pursue these options.

Schools' resources need to be augmented through alliances with employers in both the private and the public sectors. Part-time employment and mentoring programs will depend upon this collaboration.

The success of the conflict mediation program suggests that students themselves should be given greater responsibility for the school environment, particularly having older students, including students at risk, be tutors or advisors to younger students. A dropout prevention program needs to begin in the earliest grades and to be sustained throughout the students' careers in school.

The longitudinal findings especially argue for school-based planning that takes into account the specific resources and problems of each school. Schools need to establish feasible but challenging short-term goals within a framework of long-term goals. The evaluation found that DPI units were held more accountable for the number of services they recorded than for student outcomes. The schools and the Board of Education must share responsibility and accountability for student outcomes. To facilitate this, the Board should furnish sufficient computer equipment, programs, and training for each school to be able to profile data for planning and delivery of programs and services.

The Dropout Prevention Initiative produced a wealth of information about the attendance and courses passed of different groups of students in different activities in different schools. Schools and the Board of Education need to learn how to use this information and the new data the schools generate to inform planning and programming decisions.

Finally, it is essential that there be an adult who is in touch with each student and to whom other staff can refer for communication with and about the student. Houses, subschools or mini-schools, and advisory and mentoring systems can facilitate this process provided that they do not isolate and track students at risk. It is only through personal contact that students can experience the care that is the bottom line of dropout prevention.

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We are grateful for the assistance of many individuals in the preparation of this report. Aaron Pallas of Teachers College and David Rindskopf of the City University of New York Graduate Center particularly helped us with various statistical questions over the course of the project. We appreciate the contributions of DPI Evaluation Project staff who co-authored our previous reports: Thomas Bailey, Luisa Contreras, Robert Crain, Kiveli Filmeridis, Robert Futterman, Carol Gayle, Joseph Gerics, Judith Goldwater, Kenneth Jewell, Young-sil Kang, Nava Lerer, Sanna Randolph, Michele Reich, Carolyn Springer, Diana Stewart, Susan Sullivan, Miriam Westheimer, and Denise Willis. Staff of the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment at the New York City Board of Education assisted us in the collection of data and provided us with numerous computer tapes. The Office of Student Progress and the central office of the High School Dropout Prevention Program were highly cooperative, as were various individuals at the Board who provided us with budget and expenditure information. A Steering Committee made up of representatives of the Board of Education, the Mayor's Office of Youth Services, and the Office of Management and Budget asked appropriately difficult questions. Most of all, we acknowledge the openness with which the school and community based staff working in the schools, and students themselves, allowed us to observe and interview them. We hope this final report reflects the perspectives and concerns of all of these individuals as well as our own.

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Chapter One

LONGITUDINAL FINDINGS FOR TARGETED STUDENTS FROM THE FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD COHORTS IN THE DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

Joseph C. Grannis, Carolyn J. Riehl, and Selina Bendock

Summary

This study examines outcomes for targeted middle school and high school students from each of the three cohorts of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative (DPI)--Year One (1985-86), Year Two (1986-87), and Year Three (1987-88)--cumulatively from 1984-85 through the end of the 1987-88 school year.

Overall, the study has found that targeted students' attendance deteriorated over time and that it is likely that at least half of the targeted students in each cohort will have been discharged as a dropout three years after their entry into high school. This is already the result for the First Cohort of high school students, and the attendance and discharge patterns for the later high school cohorts and the attendance patterns for the middle school cohorts suggest that outcomes for these students will be similar.

This general conclusion highlights rather than diminishes the significance of the specific findings. It is argued that only through profiling the programs and the trajectories of students' careers through the schools can the dropout problem be redefined and attacked more frontally than it has been so far. School-based planning teams will need specific information about their programs and their students that is indexed to goals in order to make progress toward meeting the goals.

Targeted student population and time in program

The total number of students targeted for services in the 29 middle schools of the DPI was 4330 in 1985-86, 3922 in 1986-87, and 4752 in 1987-88. In the 13 high schools of the DPI, the total number of targeted students was 6898 in 1985-86, 4854 in 1986-87, and 4781 in 1987-88.

About one fourth of the program students were targeted for services in more than one year. From the standpoint of continuity of services, this proportion is very low.

About one half of the targeted students who were in a terminal grade in middle school (8th grade in a 6-7-8 school, 9th grade in a school with grades 7, 8, and 9) in Year One or Year Two matriculated the next year in a DPI high school, but less than one tenth in either year were targeted for services in the high school in the following year. These results varied for individual middle schools, reflecting the different extent to which they were in fact feeders to the DPI zoned high schools and the varying linkage or exchange of information between different middle schools and high schools.

Attendance outcomes

All three middle school cohorts had similar attendance losses in their first year in the program, varying only between -2.5% and -3.7% for each cohort overall. Both of the first two cohorts had a substantially larger loss of attendance in the year following their initial program year, -7.7% for the First and -8.6% for the Second Cohort. The attendance patterns thus seem to be developing similarly, and it is predicted that the Second and Third Cohorts will show a further loss in attendance similar to a loss of -8.3% that has been found for the First Cohort students in their second year after the program year.

In short, attendance has been falling sharply for the students in each middle school cohort. Still, the results varied for individual schools.

Targeted high school students from all three cohorts lost attendance at a greater rate than the middle school students in their first program year, but the loss for the Third High School Cohort, -6.4%, was slightly lower than that for the First, -10.6%, and the Second, -9.4%. Attendance losses in subsequent years for the first two high school cohorts were quite similar to the subsequent losses found for the first two middle school cohorts. Again, results varied for individual schools.

First Cohort students who were still in school in 1987-88 had had higher attendance in every year beginning with 1984-85 than the average attendance of all of the First Cohort students in school in each of these years. This was especially true at the high school level, reflecting the fact that students with lower attendance could be more readily discharged as dropouts from high school than from middle school.

Being targeted for services in more than one year did not seem to reduce students' attendance losses compared to students who received services in only one year.

Promotions and status in school

A great deal of inconsistency among the grade levels recorded for individual students in the Board of Education's Student Information Services (SIS) files makes it very difficult to determine how many students have been promoted from one year to the next. Including receipt of a high school diploma or a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) as promotions, the evaluation estimates that between 25% and 30% of the targeted high school students have been promoted in a given year. However, for students who are not promoted in a given year, a much lower promotion rate is likely to obtain in the subsequent year.

Middle school targeted students were promoted at a much higher rate than the high school students in their initial program year, but rates appear to have declined substantially in their subsequent years.

Almost two thirds (63.4%) of the First Cohort middle school ninth grade students were still in school or in a few cases had obtained a diploma three years later, i. e., at the conclusion of the 1987-88 school year. Of course, because they were even younger, all other groups of targeted middle school students, in lower grades and/or in later cohorts, were still in school at even higher rates at this time. These results fulfill the Chancellor's objective that 50% or more of students in the 9th grade or below still be in school three years later. However, the attendance trends found for the cohorts suggest that the eventual school completion rates will be as low for these students as they are turning out to be for the high school students.

The proportions of middle school students still in school varied more for individual schools than between the Community Based Organization (CBO) and School Alone program models.

By the end of 1987-88, 14.8% of the First Cohort of targeted high school students had graduated from high school or received a GED and another 12.4% were still in school or were enrolled in a GED program. At the same time, 50.7% had been discharged as dropouts. (Another 10.5% had been discharged not as dropouts, and data were missing for 11.6%.) The dropout discharges began in the program year at a rate of 15.8%, proceeded at a higher rate in the following year, 20.6%, and then occurred at the initial rate in the second year after the program 14.3%. A similar pattern seems to be developing for the Second and the Third Cohorts. Thus the school completion rate that is anticipated for all three of the high school cohorts is very low.

Although a low proportion of the targeted students are discharged into GED programs, almost as many targeted high school students received a GED (5.1%) as received a high school diploma (6.8%) in the first three years of the DPI. It appears that the GED route has so far been more efficient than the regular school route for highly at-risk students to complete their education at the secondary level.

Conclusion

At the same time that the program overall has clearly not been succeeding, the variations among the individual schools for all of the results are important. It is recommended that the Board of Education develop the capacity within each school to generate goal-indexed profiles for students, grade levels, programs, and activities. Only with a clear picture in each school of what is happening to the students over time can planning teams set goals that are both attainable and challenging for increasing student retention and school completion.

Chapter One

LONGITUDINAL FINDINGS FOR TARGETED STUDENTS FROM THE FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD COHORTS IN THE DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

Introduction

The Final Reports for Years One, Two, and Three of the Dropout Prevention Initiative (DPI) have presented various findings that compared the performance of targeted students in the program year in question with the same students' performance in the prior year. (A summary description of the Dropout Prevention Initiative and the findings already reported for Years One, Two, and Three is contained in Chapter 5 of this report.) However, none of the reports so far has looked beyond the program year to a subsequent year. The analyses in this chapter do take this longer perspective and present findings for all program students as of the conclusion of Year Three, the end of the 1987-88 school year.

Only for students who were in Year One of the DPI, 1985-86, can we ask how they had fared two years later, by the end of the 1987-88 school year. Since it would not be valid to judge a program by its results for a first cohort alone, the findings here might be taken more to be base-line data on the students than definitive outcomes. On the other hand, to the extent that findings for the second and third cohorts are consistent with those for the beginning year(s) of the first cohort, the results will then appear to be more revealing about the DPI program that was implemented, rather than just its initial phase.

In any case, an important function of these first analyses--as with most of the analyses that Teachers College has presented in its reports to date--is to model the kinds of analysis that should be instructive as the Board of Education makes a more deliberately formative use of the program evaluation than it has done, or has been able to do, so far.

We will consistently refer to DPI targeted students as follows:

"First Cohort" or "Year One" students are those who were targeted for services in 1985-86;

"Second Cohort" or "Year Two" students are those targeted for services in 1986-87;

"Third Cohort" or "Year Three" students are those targeted for services in 1987-88.

As will be seen below, there is some overlap between the cohorts, for example, some students targeted for services in 1985-86 were also targeted for services in 1986-87. For most analyses, we have not distinguished between the results for new and continuing students targeted in a given year.

Data Sources

Teachers College combined a variety of datafiles to carry out the longitudinal analyses:

> the evaluation's datafiles on each cohort, previously received from the Board of Education, including grade and school enrolled in, attendance for two years, and admit/discharge data at the end of the cohort year, for each targeted student;
>
> an Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) high school database for all students enrolled in the 13 DPI high schools from 1985-86 through 1987-88, including grade, attendance, and admit/discharge data (and for some students, 1984-85 attendance figures as well);
>
> for students who had been targeted in the DPI but who were not in the database for the 13 high schools, i. e., many middle school students and some high school students who had gone to other schools, a file that was separately requested from OREA to get updates on attendance and admit/discharge status and school enrolled in during each of the three years.

Student Information Systems (SIS) attendance data were used, or hand-coded attendance if SIS data were not available (in the OREA files); if only one semester of attendance data was available, it was used to stand for the whole school year.

Grade codes entered by DPI coordinators were compared with SIS codes and previous/following year OREA codes to obtain grade level and promotion information.

This report does not include findings for comparison students not targeted for services in the Dropout Prevention Initiative. A comparison group was not formed in Year One. Results for comparison groups in Year Three have already been reported in the final reports for Year Three, and used the same end-of-1987-88 data base that has been used in the present study. In Year Two, discharged students were removed from the program rosters of five of the high schools before the lists of targeted students were made up for the evaluation, partially invalidating any comparisons between targeted and non-targeted students; a comparison group was formed for Year Two, but results will be more meaningful when they are analyzed over a longer time span than is possible for this report. It is suggested that the longitudinal study be repeated and include the comparison groups for Year Two and Year Three at the end of 1989-90, when at least three years will have elapsed since the initial targeting of all students for the DPI.

Targeted Student Population and Articulation

Middle schools

The total number of students targeted for services in the 29 middle schools of the Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) (the only middle schools represented in the DPI) was 4330 in 1985-86, fell to 3922 in 1986-87, and increased to 4752 in 1987-88. (Table 1-1.) The fluctuations are explained chiefly by Community Based Organization (CBO) model schools serving fewer students in Year Two compared to Year One, because in many of these schools Board of Education personnel did not or could not take on cases in addition to the cases the CBOs contracted to serve; and by both CBO and School Alone model schools increasing the number of students served in Year Three in order to add students who were eligible for New York State remedial instruction funding without dropping students targeted for tax-levy funded DPP services at the outset of the year.

High schools

In the high schools, the total number of students targeted for services in Year One was 6898. The total was reduced to 4854 in Year Two and stayed at almost the same level, 4781, for Year Three. (Table 1-2.) In Year One, many more students had been listed on program rosters for budget purposes than were actually targeted for services, particularly in the systemic model schools. This fact, noted in the *Final Report For Year One*, adds a further reason for caution in interpreting the results for the Year One high school students.

Total time in program

About one fourth (24.3%) of the 17,488 students enrolled in Year One or Year Two were targeted for services in more than one year. (Table 1-3.) From the standpoint of continuity of services, or services sustained over a substantial part of a student's career in school, the proportion of students receiving services in more than one year was low.

Table 1-4 traces the paths of students' program status from Year One through Year Three. It can be seen, for example, that of the 4330 students who were in the middle school program in Year One, 3194 were not in any DPI program in Year Two, but then 28 of these latter students were re-enrolled in the middle school program in Year Three while 197 were enrolled in the high school program in Year Three. Of the 4330 Year One middle school program students, 1361 or 31.4% were targeted for services in Year Two and/or in Year Three. Of the 6898 Year One high school program students, 1525 or 22.1% were targeted for services in

TABLE 1-1

Total Program Enrollments, by School and Year
DPI Longitudinal Study

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

School	Year 1 1985-86	Year 2 1986-87	Year 3 1987-88
OVERALL	4330	3922	4752
School-Alone Model			
14	107	130	215
15	152	131	196
17	161	164	140
18	173	174	186
20	135	147	188
21	147	143	167
28	163	172	174
29	148	160	177
31	155	133	215
33	165	156	186
34	161	95	156
35	164	146	181
36	155	156	241
38	163	152	174
39	145	175	175
School-with-CBO Model			
16	128	101	104
19	65	99	108
22	153	110	128
23	186	49	129
24	122	137	173
25	171	161	181
26	219	234	241
27	117	102	110
30	161	114	109
32	149	106	119
37	160	115	142
40	98	106	120
41	159	150	208
42	148	104	109

TABLE 1-2

Total Program Enrollments, by School and Year
DPI Longitudinal Study

HIGH SCHOOLS

School	Year 1 1985-86	Year 2 1986-87	Year 3 1987-88
OVERALL	6898	4854	4781
Modified Systemic Model			
1	449	153	321
5	632	444	465
6	492	425	568
7	581	176	224
8	1065	509	445
10	494	222	334
Modified CBO Model			
3	252	212	317
11	456	923	351
12	472	152	273
13	191	202	165
AIDP School-with-CBO Model			
2	727	505	429
4	659	600	517
9	428	331	372

TABLE 1-3

Total Enrollments in DPI, by Time in Program DPI Longitudinal Study

Time in Program	Total Enrollment
OVERALL	24,077
YEAR 1 ONLY	8,348
YEARS 1 AND 2	1,916
YEARS 1 AND 3	364
YEAR 2 ONLY	4,280
YEARS 2 AND 3	1,974
YEAR 3 ONLY	6,589
ALL 3 YEARS	606

TABLE 1-4

Program Articulation
DPI Longitudinal Study

ALL PROGRAM STUDENTS

Year One	Year Two	Year Three
12849 Not in Prog	6595 Not in Prog	6 Not in Prog
		3790 In MS Prog
		2799 In HS Prog
	2986 In MS Prog	2034 Not in Prog
		857 In MS Prog
		95 In HS Prog
	3268 In HS Prog	2246 Not in Prog
		0 In MS Prog
		1022 In HS Prog
4330 In MS Prog	3194 Not in Prog	2969 Not in Prog
		28 In MS Prog
		197 In HS Prog
	935 In MS Prog	787 Not in Prog
		77 In MS Prog
		71 In HS Prog
	201 In HS Prog	116 Not in Prog
		0 In MS Prog
		85 In HS Prog
6898 In HS Pro	5512 Not in Prog	5373 Not in Prog
		0 In MS Prog
		139 In HS Prog
	1 In MS Prog	0 Not in Prog
		0 In MS Prog
		1 In HS Prog
	1385 In HS Prog	1013 Not in Prog
		0 In MS Prog
		372 In HS Prog

Year Two and/or in Year Three.

Program articulation for students in a terminal grade

From a different perspective, one can ask what proportions of students targeted for services in their terminal year in a middle grade continued in the program the following year and in what kind of school. Of the students who were in their last year of middle school in Year One, 46.7% went on to a DPI high school in Year Two, but only 8.1% were targeted for services in a DPI high school program. (Table 1-5.) A larger proportion of the Year Two students in their last year of middle school, 56.8%, went on to a DPI high school in Year Three, but still this time just 7.0% were targeted for DPI services in the high school. (Table 1-6.) These findings accord very closely with what the evaluation found from comparing middle school and high school registers and program lists in Year Two and Year Three to study the transition of students from middle school to high school. (*Final Report on the High Schools for Year Three, Part Two*, Chapter 9.)

The proportion of DPI terminal middle school students going on to a DPI high school in the subsequent year varied greatly between the schools. For First Cohort students, the proportion was only 10.7% in School 19 and was 80.6% in School 26. (Table 1-5.) For Second Cohort students, the proportions varied between 17.5% in School 14 and 97.1% in School 26. (Table 1-6.)

For both cohorts, there were several middle schools in which *none* of the students in the DPI in their terminal year were targeted for services in a DPI high school. At the same time, 33.8% of the Year One terminal DPI students in School 37 were enrolled in the DPI in a high school in Year Two (particularly in High School 11, not shown in the table) and 41.1% of the terminal students in School 26 in Year Two were targeted for DPI services in a high school in Year Three (particularly in High School 3).

It is possible that additional numbers of students were enrolled in an AIDP program outside the DPI in a year subsequent to their being targeted for services in one of the DPI schools. These enrollments are not included in the TC analysis.

Proportions of terminal middle school students entering a DPI high school varied more by district than did the proportions of these students who were targeted for DPI services in the high school. Especially low proportions of students in their terminal year in the program in the three DPI schools of District 9 went on to a DPI high school and were enrolled in the DPI program. Relatively high proportions of students in District 14 schools went on to a DPI high school. However, the proportions of these students who were targeted for services in the high schools were still low, especially so for students from two of the three sending middle schools.

These findings reflect at least two major factors affecting

TABLE 1-5

Articulation for Students in Terminal Year of Middle School*
DPI Longitudinal Study

YEAR TWO LOCATION OF STUDENTS IN YEAR ONE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Year 1 School	District	N	Stayed in Middle School	Non-DPI High School	DPI High School		N	No DPI Program	Middle School DPI Program	High School DPI Program
OVERALL		1842	6.1%	47.2%	46.7%	:	1984	90.2%	1.7%	8.1%
School-Alone Model										
14	7	51	2.0%	80.4%	17.6%	:	55	96.4%	1.8%	1.8%
15	7	70	7.1%	75.7%	17.1%	:	78	96.2%	3.8%	
34	7	68	7.4%	72.1%	20.6%	:	74	97.3%	1.4%	1.4%
17	10	89	4.5%	38.2%	57.3%	:	90	88.9%		11.1%
33	10	82	11.0%	69.5%	19.5%	:	88	95.5%	3.4%	1.1%
35	10	82	3.7%	50.0%	46.3%	:	86	89.5%	2.3%	8.1%
21	14	61		36.1%	63.9%	:	62	93.5%		6.5%
28	14	70	7.1%	32.9%	60.0%	:	74	90.5%	2.7%	6.8%
39	14	47	12.8%	27.7%	59.6%	:	58	94.8%		5.2%
18	17	76	11.8%	65.8%	22.4%	:	85	92.9%	2.4%	4.7%
31	17	55	12.7%	50.9%	36.4%	:	61	93.4%	4.9%	1.6%
36	17	91	2.2%	23.1%	74.7%	:	95	93.7%		6.3%
20	32	52	7.7%	57.7%	34.6%	:	57	98.2%	1.8%	
29	32	56	5.4%	41.1%	53.6%	:	61	91.8%		8.2%
38	32	74	6.8%	17.6%	75.7%	:	83	78.3%	3.6%	18.1%
School-with-CBO Model										
16	3	39	7.7%	41.0%	51.3%	:	41	95.1%	2.4%	2.4%
32	3	53	9.4%	47.2%	43.4%	:	64	87.5%	7.8%	4.7%
42	3	56	8.9%	51.8%	39.3%	:	63	98.4%	1.6%	
24	9	47	6.4%	36.2%	57.4%	:	49	93.9%		6.1%
25	9	45	2.2%	55.6%	42.2%	:	46	97.8%		2.2%
41	9	72	5.6%	44.4%	50.0%	:	76	89.5%		10.5%
22	15	47	4.3%	38.3%	57.4%	:	52	94.2%	1.9%	3.8%
27	15	43	4.7%	53.5%	41.9%	:	45	91.1%	2.2%	6.7%
40	15	52	11.5%	32.7%	55.8%	:	54	79.6%	1.9%	18.5%
19	19	28	3.6%	85.7%	10.7%	:	30	100.0%		
30	19	65	4.6%	60.0%	35.4%	:	69	87.0%	1.4%	11.6%
37	19	69	4.3%	29.0%	66.7%	:	71	66.2%		33.8%
23	27	94	3.2%	73.4%	23.4%	:	98	95.9%		4.1%
26	27	108	2.8%	16.7%	80.6%	:	119	73.1%	1.7%	25.2%

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* Note: Some middle schools end at grade 8, while others end at grade 9.

TABLE 1-6

Articulation for Students in Terminal Year of Middle School*
DPI Longitudinal Study

YEAR THREE LOCATION OF STUDENTS IN YEAR TWO MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Year 2 School	District	N	Stayed in Middle School	Non-DPI High School	DPI High School		N	No DPI Program	Middle School DPI Program	High School DPI Program
OVERALL		1184	4.1%	39.2%	56.8%	:	1917	90.5%	2.5%	7.0%
School-Alone Model										
14	7	40		82.5%	17.5%	:	79	98.7%		1.3%
15	7	53	3.8%	77.4%	18.9%	:	76	94.7%	2.6%	2.6%
34	7	28	10.7%	67.9%	21.4%	:	42	92.9%	7.1%	
17	10	42	4.8%	50.0%	45.2%	:	60	90.0%	3.3%	6.7%
33	10	81	2.5%	56.8%	40.7%	:	106	91.5%	1.9%	6.6%
35	10	43	2.3%	62.8%	34.9%	:	77	96.1%	1.3%	2.6%
21	14	35		8.6%	91.4%	:	69	98.6%		1.4%
28	14	77	2.6%	19.5%	77.9%	:	111	89.2%	1.8%	9.0%
39	14	38	2.6%	5.3%	92.1%	:	64	95.3%	1.6%	3.1%
18	17	64	3.1%	67.2%	29.7%	:	94	90.4%	2.1%	7.4%
31	17	60	1.7%	45.0%	53.3%	:	75	96.0%	1.3%	2.7%
36	17	58		29.3%	70.7%	:	86	95.3%		4.7%
20	32	34	8.8%	32.4%	58.8%	:	65	90.8%	4.6%	4.6%
29	32	40	10.0%	27.5%	62.5%	:	83	95.2%	4.8%	
38	32	60	11.7%	16.7%	71.7%	:	78	76.9%	9.0%	14.1%
School-with-CBO Model										
16	3	33	3.0%	57.6%	39.4%	:	55	92.7%	1.8%	5.5%
32	3	23	4.3%	39.1%	56.5%	:	37	94.6%	2.7%	2.7%
42	3	19		57.9%	42.1%	:	30	83.3%		16.7%
24	9	36	8.3%	25.0%	66.7%	:	68	89.7%	4.4%	5.9%
25	9	46	15.2%	39.1%	45.7%	:	69	84.1%	10.1%	5.8%
41	9	48		45.8%	54.2%	:	76	96.1%		3.9%
22	15	23	4.3%	26.1%	69.6%	:	48	93.8%	2.1%	4.2%
27	15	20	10.0%	25.0%	65.0%	:	41	90.2%	4.9%	4.9%
40	15	25		8.0%	92.0%	:	61	90.2%		9.8%
19	19	20		75.0%	25.0%	:	43	97.7%		2.3%
30	19	23	8.7%	39.1%	52.2%	:	46	93.5%	4.3%	2.2%
37	19	43	2.3%	20.9%	76.7%	:	65	83.1%	1.5%	15.4%
23	27	3		66.7%	33.3%	:	23	100.0%		
26	27	69		2.9%	97.1%	:	90	58.9%		41.1%

---

* Note: Some middle schools end at grade 8, while others end at grade 9.

the articulation of DPI students. First, there is variation in the extent to which the so-called "feeder" middle schools really do feed students to their linked high schools. Second, even where more middle school students do go on to the linked high school, there is variation in the exchange of information between the middle school and the high school--linkage visits, list notices, etc.--affecting program articulation for the students.

School 26 illustrates a situation where both factors increased the likelihood of DPI middle school students becoming enrolled in the high school DPI program. (1) For geographic reasons, School 26 students were especially likely to go to their zoned high school, High School 3. (2) Furthermore, the same CBO worked in School 26 and High School 3, Federated Employment Guidance Service (FEGS), facilitating program linkage. School 23 was also served by FEGS, but was a feeder to a different high school that was not in the DPI.

In District 15, students were served by Good Shepherd Services, which also worked in High School 7, the zoned high school for District 15. Generally half or more of the students in their terminal year in a DPI middle school in District 15 went on to a DPI high school, specifically to High School 7 and especially after Year Two. Still, however, only small fractions of these students were targeted for services in the DPI high school, except from School 40 after Year One, when 18.5% of the program students completing middle school in this year were targeted for services in a DPI high school the following year.

Attendance

Two questions need to be distinguished from each other at the outset. One asks what was the attendance of *all students who were targeted for services in a given cohort*. The other asks what was the attendance of *just those students from a given cohort who continued in school into the last year of the study*. The distinction between these two calculations will be seen to be particularly important at the high school level, where students with low attendance were more liable to be discharged as dropouts than at the middle school level.

Middle School Cohorts

How did attendance change for each cohort of students targeted for services in the middle schools, both in the year in which they were initially targeted and in their subsequent year(s) in school through 1987-88? To answer this question we have obtained data on attendance in 1984-85 through 1987-88 for middle school targeted students, whether they were subsequently enrolled in a DPI school or in another school in the New York City public school system.

Attendance of students in the middle school cohorts.

Targeted middle school students in the First Cohort had an

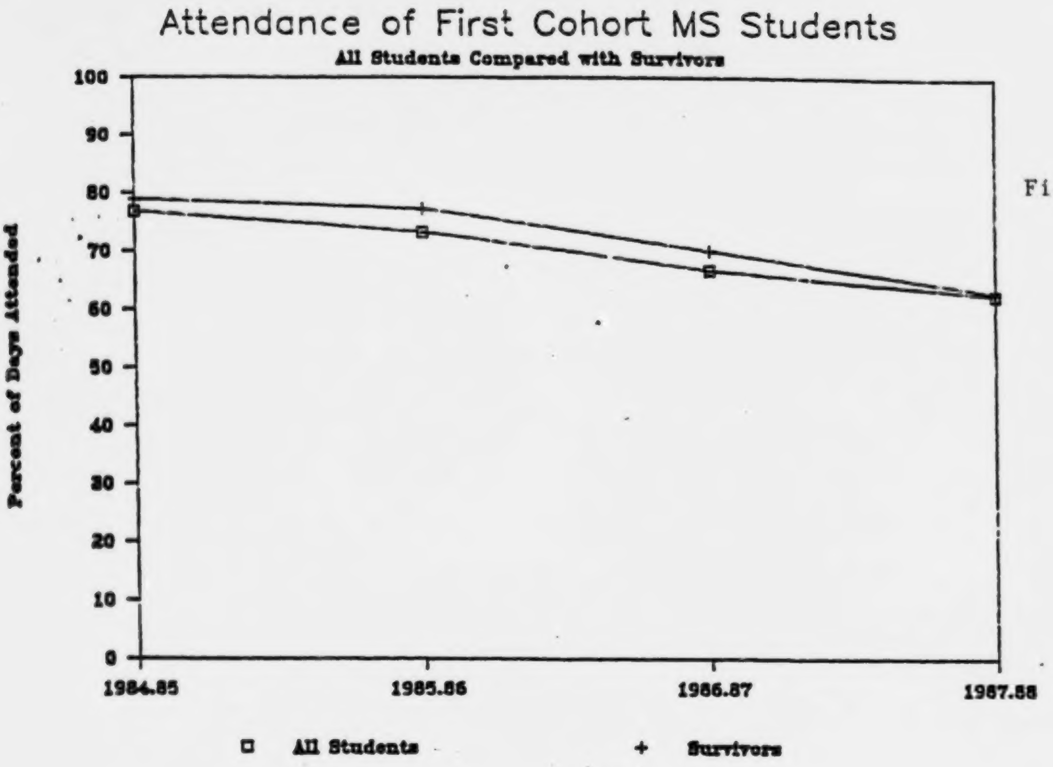

Figure 1-1

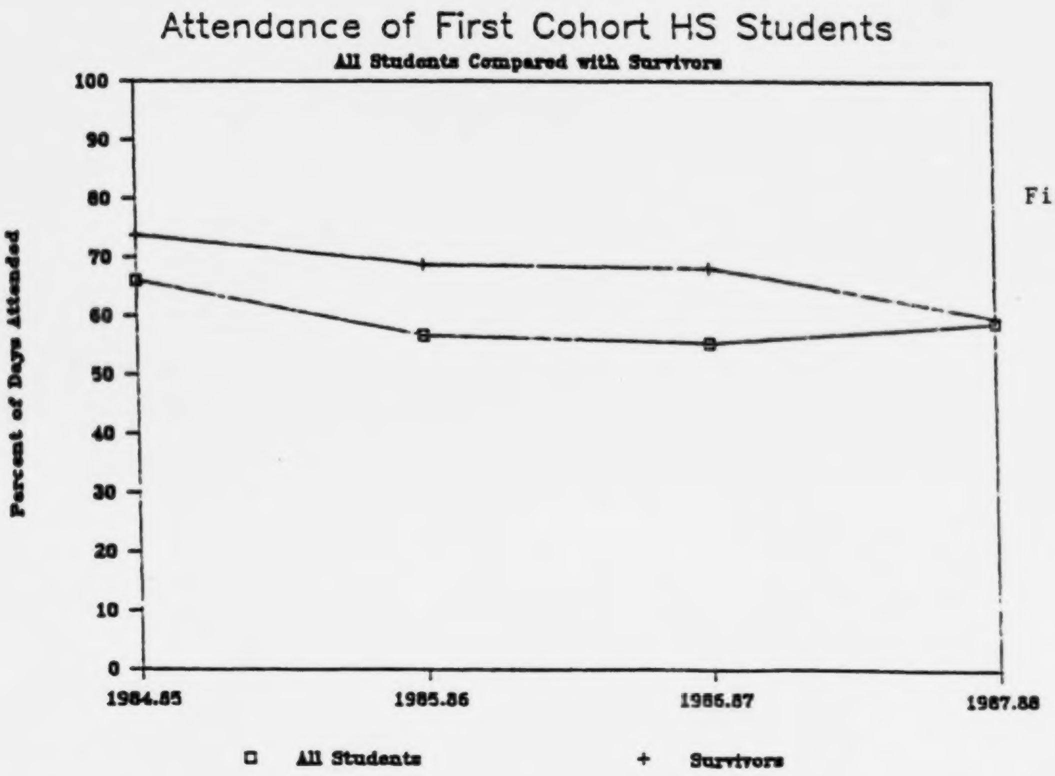

Figure 1-2

attendance change of -3.7% between their program year, 1985-86, and their prior year, 1984-85. For those who were still in school for at least part of 1986-87, attendance dropped considerably further in this year, -7.7%. And for the still smaller number who were still in school in 1987-88, attendance fell another -8.3%. (Table 1-7.)

For the Second Cohort of middle school students, attendance fell -2.5% during their initial program year, 1986-87, and -8.6% in the following year, 1987-88. (Table 1-8.)

Finally, the Third Cohort of middle school students had an attendance loss of -3.3% in their initial program year, 1987-88. (Table 1-9.)

The attendance loss for the initial program year is seen to have been very similar for all three cohorts. Likewise, the larger loss in the first year following the initial program year is quite similar for the two cohorts for whom these data are available. One must predict that the same losses will obtain for the second and third cohorts, in their subsequent years in school, that have already been found for the First Cohort students.

The average attendance of *all* students in the First Cohort for whom attendance data are available for 1984-85, 1985-86, 1986-87, and 1987-88 respectively was 76.8%, 73.2%, 66.8%, and 62.3% (Table 1-7 and Figure 1-1.) For just those First Cohort students who were *still in school for at least part of 1987-88*, the respective attendance averages were 78.9%, 77.1%, 69.9%, and 62.3%. (Figure 1-1.) Thus, the average attendance of First Cohort students who remained in the schools into 1987-88 was somewhat higher in the earlier years than the attendance of all the First Cohort students in the schools in each of those years.

Attendance changes varied considerably from one school to another within each program year for each cohort. The many school-level factors that contributed to this have been explored in detail in the evaluation reports each year and do not lend themselves to summary here. What one does see now that could not be seen in the data for each program year separately is the volatility in the change scores for the cohorts in the different schools. For example, the students in the First Cohort in School 17 had an attendance change of -1.0% in the first program year, but -11.3% in the following year, while the students in School 40 had an attendance change of -8.9% in the first program year and a change of +2.3% in the subsequent year. These patterns can be explained statistically in terms of regression to the mean. They reflect the fact that there was not a sustained program effect overriding the many factors that normally influence students' attendance rates.

Individual schools are in the best position to grasp at least some of these factors. Thus, School 38 would want to inquire into why its First Cohort students had a smaller than

TABLE 1-7

Attendance Change over Time, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

STUDENTS IN YEAR ONE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1985-86

School	Avg. 1984-85 Attend.	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change*	(N)	Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	76.8%	73.2%	-3.7%	(3,454)	66.8%	-7.7%	(2,963)	62.3%	-8.3%	(2,518)
School-Alone Model										
14	78.1%	70.7%	-7.6%	(99)	67.0%	-4.2%	(88)	62.5%	-6.0%	(78)
15	73.7%	70.2%	-4.4%	(108)	59.3%	-14.3%	(99)	57.3%	-12.5%	(73)
17	79.0%	78.3%	-1.0%	(116)	69.0%	-11.3%	(105)	66.3%	-5.2%	(95)
18	75.1%	63.7%	-10.2%	(136)	61.5%	-7.1%	(110)	55.3%	-8.8%	(91)
20	79.2%	74.8%	-4.8%	(122)	67.4%	-9.7%	(92)	60.0%	-10.4%	(79)
21	84.0%	82.6%	-1.6%	(136)	72.6%	-8.4%	(105)	66.7%	-9.2%	(94)
28	77.3%	75.0%	-2.4%	(130)	67.2%	-9.4%	(129)	59.3%	-10.3%	(109)
29	80.8%	87.5%	6.6%	(116)	73.0%	-11.8%	(104)	67.6%	-8.2%	(91)
31	75.4%	70.7%	-4.3%	(109)	72.9%	-3.4%	(89)	65.8%	-7.7%	(79)
33	78.5%	78.0%	-0.3%	(149)	67.9%	-11.8%	(123)	61.5%	-10.2%	(101)
34	71.1%	64.2%	-7.7%	(134)	63.7%	-7.1%	(105)	56.2%	-6.2%	(81)
35	77.2%	80.0%	1.3%	(141)	67.8%	-12.4%	(129)	60.7%	-12.4%	(108)
36	77.5%	78.5%	1.2%	(133)	68.1%	-7.7%	(115)	61.0%	-12.4%	(102)
38	71.2%	70.1%	-2.2%	(96)	62.8%	2.2%	(112)	55.9%	-13.6%	(93)
39	77.9%	69.3%	-8.9%	(114)	65.9%	-8.0%	(88)	60.2%	-9.9%	(68)
School-with-CBO Model										
16	82.9%	79.6%	-3.6%	(80)	73.6%	-5.3%	(85)	67.0%	-9.5%	(74)
19	81.7%	80.0%	-1.7%	(44)	71.7%	-7.2%	(44)	69.2%	-2.6%	(42)
22	72.9%	69.9%	-3.6%	(123)	63.2%	-8.0%	(105)	55.7%	-11.3%	(86)
23	77.6%	72.8%	-4.5%	(156)	71.4%	-2.8%	(119)	73.5%	-3.8%	(99)
24	72.2%	73.7%	0.0%	(87)	59.7%	-14.1%	(78)	60.3%	-3.1%	(72)
25	79.8%	77.3%	-2.5%	(136)	64.4%	-12.2%	(104)	67.7%	-4.2%	(91)
26	75.5%	70.2%	-5.1%	(203)	64.4%	-6.9%	(168)	68.3%	2.1%	(151)
27	74.4%	68.2%	-5.4%	(101)	62.6%	-7.0%	(74)	58.6%	-9.2%	(62)
30	73.6%	71.0%	-2.7%	(153)	72.0%	-2.3%	(115)	65.6%	-10.7%	(100)
32	79.9%	68.8%	-11.7%	(103)	67.7%	-7.1%	(89)	64.6%	-5.2%	(67)
37	74.8%	71.1%	-3.8%	(95)	61.4%	-12.4%	(122)	53.5%	-9.3%	(109)
40	75.4%	66.9%	-8.9%	(90)	68.8%	2.3%	(75)	59.8%	-11.1%	(69)
41	79.0%	71.6%	-7.2%	(112)	68.1%	-4.5%	(110)	63.0%	-11.8%	(86)
42	75.7%	71.8%	-3.4%	(132)	65.5%	-10.0%	(82)	56.7%	-9.6%	(68)

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* For Year 1 students, attendance change after Year 1 and attendance change after Year 2 were based on slightly different computations of 1985-86 attendance.

TABLE 1-8

Attendance Change over Time, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

STUDENTS IN YEAR TWO MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1986-87

School	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)	Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	77.2%	74.9%	-2.5%	(3,414)	67.4%	-8.6%	(3,348)
School-Alone Model							
14	76.7%	74.6%	-1.7%	(115)	70.6%	-4.3%	(111)
15	79.0%	74.7%	-4.4%	(111)	62.0%	-14.2%	(108)
17	77.3%	78.7%	2.5%	(114)	73.2%	-5.4%	(134)
18	70.7%	63.1%	-7.7%	(154)	58.2%	-5.2%	(159)
20	77.7%	75.9%	-1.2%	(139)	69.3%	-8.4%	(126)
21	85.1%	82.1%	-3.2%	(129)	76.2%	-7.9%	(123)
28	78.6%	75.5%	-3.2%	(152)	64.9%	-13.4%	(139)
29	78.5%	79.0%	0.5%	(152)	71.5%	-9.1%	(134)
31	79.1%	79.7%	0.6%	(130)	69.9%	-10.2%	(123)
33	81.6%	79.3%	-2.5%	(151)	70.0%	-10.1%	(139)
34	67.7%	67.3%	-6.5%	(62)	61.7%	-8.8%	(76)
35	82.5%	82.1%	-0.5%	(137)	70.2%	-12.2%	(128)
36	82.5%	80.4%	-2.1%	(148)	71.1%	-10.4%	(140)
38	70.7%	73.3%	2.3%	(118)	63.9%	-10.5%	(132)
39	77.6%	70.1%	-7.7%	(157)	62.9%	-10.1%	(132)
School-with-CBO Model							
16	83.0%	83.7%	0.4%	(82)	70.5%	-14.4%	(86)
19	76.1%	78.9%	4.4%	(73)	72.4%	-6.5%	(85)
22	73.3%	70.2%	-2.0%	(92)	60.9%	-9.7%	(98)
23	82.9%	81.8%	-1.1%	(48)	77.8%	-4.5%	(46)
24	75.3%	71.0%	-5.9%	(124)	59.9%	-11.0%	(121)
25	73.3%	70.1%	-3.7%	(133)	65.1%	-6.8%	(121)
26	75.1%	70.0%	-5.1%	(225)	70.3%	-0.5%	(208)
27	78.7%	76.3%	-2.4%	(96)	67.9%	-11.3%	(85)
30	76.3%	76.1%	-0.2%	(110)	70.7%	-6.9%	(98)
32	77.7%	75.2%	-2.4%	(85)	66.9%	-9.0%	(88)
37	77.9%	71.8%	-5.5%	(67)	60.8%	-10.9%	(103)
40	71.8%	72.1%	-0.4%	(97)	67.8%	-4.6%	(94)
41	76.5%	74.1%	-2.9%	(134)	71.0%	-6.9%	(117)
42	74.5%	72.9%	-4.1%	(79)	61.8%	-12.0%	(94)

TABLE 1-9

Attendance Change over Time, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

STUDENTS IN YEAR THREE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1987-88

School	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)		Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	78.5%	77.3%	-1.8%	(811)	:	74.2%	-3.3%	(4,138)
School-Alone Model					:			
14	86.7%	79.5%	-3.9%	(18)	:	72.7%	-9.0%	(142)
15	83.7%	79.4%	0.0%	(18)	:	73.5%	-7.9%	(131)
17	76.1%	75.7%	-5.9%	(9)	:	77.4%	3.0%	(113)
18	76.8%	75.2%	-5.5%	(22)	:	70.7%	-5.5%	(157)
20	79.3%	78.0%	1.7%	(54)	:	74.6%	-3.6%	(185)
21	83.2%	79.9%	-2.8%	(41)	:	80.4%	-0.7%	(127)
28	80.9%	78.4%	-2.1%	(23)	:	76.9%	-0.6%	(138)
29	72.7%	76.7%	5.1%	(54)	:	78.9%	1.2%	(159)
31	79.3%	78.1%	-1.5%	(35)	:	73.8%	-4.1%	(203)
33	80.1%	78.1%	-2.4%	(27)	:	74.8%	-3.3%	(184)
34	78.8%	76.9%	-5.2%	(17)	:	73.6%	-2.9%	(109)
35	79.8%	79.5%	-0.6%	(39)	:	75.1%	-4.4%	(176)
36	83.3%	79.2%	-5.7%	(21)	:	74.2%	-4.7%	(220)
38	68.8%	77.0%	9.1%	(26)	:	73.6%	-3.5%	(170)
39	78.5%	78.0%	-4.4%	(58)	:	72.7%	-5.4%	(172)
School-with-CBO Model					:			
16	87.6%	80.5%	-2.5%	(25)	:	77.3%	-4.2%	(85)
19	73.5%	74.7%	6.7%	(13)	:	76.8%	2.4%	(86)
22	71.5%	75.2%	0.4%	(16)	:	70.5%	-4.7%	(126)
23	80.6%	73.5%	-6.5%	(19)	:	70.9%	-2.3%	(125)
24	74.7%	71.4%	-10.0%	(21)	:	71.6%	-2.3%	(118)
25	77.6%	77.4%	-9.1%	(35)	:	77.7%	-0.1%	(169)
26	81.0%	78.0%	-4.2%	(53)	:	77.8%	-0.2%	(231)
27	79.7%	78.7%	0.0%	(23)	:	72.7%	-6.3%	(106)
30	76.9%	76.4%	-0.2%	(36)	:	76.4%	0.0%	(108)
32	79.6%	76.8%	-2.7%	(29)	:	71.8%	-6.0%	(100)
37	69.6%	75.2%	5.6%	(2)	:	71.1%	-5.5%	(95)
40	72.0%	73.5%	-3.1%	(16)	:	66.5%	-6.6%	(117)
41	75.2%	76.7%	-1.3%	(35)	:	74.8%	-2.6%	(191)
42	76.9%	78.1%	-2.7%	(26)	:	70.2%	-7.8%	(95)

average attendance loss (-2.2%) in Year One, an attendance gain (+2.2%) in Year Two, but a large loss (-13.6%) in Year Three. The answer would probably have to do with factors both in the middle school itself and in the high school(s) receiving most of its students. There were in fact positive changes for students in all three cohorts between 1985-86 and 1986-87--not only the +2.2% for First Cohort students, but +2.3% for students from the Second Cohort and +9.1% for a small sample of students from the Third Cohort (who were not yet in the program during 1986-87). School 38 was identified in the *Final Report on the Middle Schools for Year Two* as a school which, after controlling for students' prior attendance, made a significant contribution to students' attendance in 1986-87. The report included these observations:

> In yet another attendance gain school, this one in the Project Connect [School Alone] model, there was minimal district support. The principal delegated responsibility for the program to an assistant principal. Budget was late and several positions were filled late in the fall, including a guidance counselor. However, enterprises were developed early, including a photography project that was continued from the previous year. In all categories except home visits, relatively low numbers of services were reported from this school. This was partly a function of under-reporting services. However, access to targeted students was observed to have been enhanced by a semi-blocked arrangement of students in small-size classes. These small classes were achieved despite the fact that the average class size for the school as a whole (30.8) was higher than for any of the other attendance gain or loss schools. Both the school as a whole and the control group [a post hoc sample of eligible but not-targeted students in the school] achieved attendance gains between 1985-86 and 1986-87. (p. 63)

Most targeted students from School 38 went on to High School 10. It was generally the case that middle school students' attendance dropped upon going to high school, but the loss might have been especially pronounced for students going to High School 10.

Attendance of students in the high school cohorts.

Targeted high school students in the First Cohort had an attendance change of -10.6% between their first program year, 1985-86, and their prior year, 1984-85. For those who were still in school for at least part of 1986-87, attendance dropped further, -7.8%. And for those who were still in school in 1987-88, attendance fell another -8.3%. (Table 1-10.) The overall attendance losses in the first and second year after the students' initial year in the high school program are almost identical to the losses of middle school students after their initial program year.

TABLE 1-10

Attendance Change over Time, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

STUDENTS IN YEAR ONE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1985-86

School	Avg. 1984-85 Attend.	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change*	(N)	Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	66.0%	56.6%	-10.6%	(4,987)	55.4%	-7.8%	(3,402)	58.9%	-8.3%	(1,605)
Modified Systemic Model										
1	62.9%	55.3%	-7.4%	(405)	59.5%	-6.3%	(187)	58.9%	-12.4%	(108)
5	74.7%	65.6%	-8.0%	(274)	64.2%	-0.2%	(295)	61.6%	-6.5%	(142)
6	79.2%	62.0%	-18.4%	(377)	63.5%	-6.9%	(283)	62.0%	-10.8%	(187)
7	71.4%	49.7%	-23.1%	(208)	49.2%	-8.2%	(275)	55.6%	-3.1%	(136)
8	65.4%	54.8%	-13.7%	(795)	60.2%	-5.2%	(451)	63.1%	-8.7%	(208)
10	57.1%	56.2%	-3.6%	(363)	54.6%	-9.3%	(212)	57.7%	-6.8%	(112)
Modified CBO Model										
3	71.5%	63.7%	-8.1%	(222)	57.1%	-8.7%	(154)	63.4%	-2.2%	(70)
11	66.0%	53.7%	-12.8%	(348)	50.3%	-9.7%	(270)	68.4%	-1.0%	(91)
12	68.5%	53.4%	-16.8%	(359)	48.1%	-9.5%	(292)	57.8%	-3.3%	(139)
13	69.9%	68.6%	-1.4%	(149)	71.1%	-2.4%	(78)	59.7%	-14.0%	(43)
AIDP School-with-CBO Model										
2	54.0%	47.2%	-9.4%	(550)	43.5%	-12.5%	(345)	50.7%	-7.9%	(143)
4	67.3%	65.4%	-2.5%	(574)	58.5%	-10.4%	(309)	49.9%	-21.3%	(124)
9	65.3%	53.7%	-13.0%	(363)	51.5%	-9.5%	(251)	58.6%	-9.5%	(102)

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* For Year 1 students, attendance change after Year 1 and attendance change after Year 2 were based on slightly different computations of 1985-86 attendance.

For the Second Cohort of high school students, attendance fell -9.4% during their initial program year, 1986-87, and -9.8% in the following year, 1987-88. (Table 1-11.)

Finally, the Third Cohort of middle high school students had an attendance loss of -6.4% in their initial program year, 1987-88. (Table 1-12.)

The attendance loss for the initial program year was very similar for the First and Second Cohorts, but was slightly less for the Third Cohort. First Cohort survivors in the year following the program year had a somewhat lesser attendance loss, but Second Cohort survivors had the same loss in the subsequent year that they had had in the program year. The findings do not show a pattern of attendance improvement for the program overall.

The average attendance of *all* high school students in the First Cohort for whom attendance data are available for 1984-85, 1985-86, 1986-87, and 1987-88 respectively was 66.0%. 56.6%, 55.4%, and 58.9% (Table 1-10 and Figure 1-2.) For just those First Cohort students who were *still in school for at least part of 1987-88,* the respective attendance averages were 73.5%, 68.4%, 67.8%, and 58.9% (Figure 1-2.) The students who remained in school into the third year (1987-88) thus had substantially higher attendance in the earlier years. The discrepancy between the attendance of all cohort students on register and those who remained into the third year is particularly evident in the initial program year and the year following; many students were discharged during or after the second year, when most of them were no longer under the protection of program status. A further result of this was that the attendance of the students still in school in the third year was higher than that of the much larger group that was still in school in the second year, and indeed than the average attendance for all of the cohort students during their first year in the program.

As was found for the middle schools, likewise for the high schools results varied substantially from one year to the next for students from each cohort in each school. Again, patterns may be most meaningful at the individual school level. For example, in High School 4, students' attendance seems to have deteriorated markedly following the program year: from a change of -2.5% in Year One, to -10.4% in Year Two and a further -21.3% in Year Three for the First Cohort students; and from -9.4% in Year Two to -20.9% in Year Three for the Second Cohort students. (Tables 1-10 and 1-11.) The explanation would need to take into account both the drastic losses of attendance found for control students in High School 4 and the large number of students participating in a GED program in High School 4, which might have had different attendance expectations; both of these factors were discussed in the *Final Report on the High Schools for Year Three.*

For High School 3, one sees a relatively low attendance loss for First Cohort students in 1987-88 (-2.2%), a gain for Second Cohort students during that year (+3.3%), and a gain for Third

TABLE 1-11

Attendance Change over Time, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

STUDENTS IN YEAR TWO HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1986-87

School	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)		Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	69.0%	60.4%	-9.4%	(3,661)	:	59.8%	-9.8%	(2,542)
Modified Systemic Model					:			
1	80.3%	73.6%	-5.8%	(89)	:	68.8%	-8.2%	(99)
5	73.2%	70.2%	-3.4%	(374)	:	68.4%	-6.1%	(275)
6	72.5%	66.8%	-6.0%	(258)	:	56.9%	-14.9%	(276)
7	67.7%	59.1%	-7.6%	(139)	:	55.7%	-7.9%	(121)
8	73.4%	69.0%	-4.9%	(407)	:	66.7%	-9.0%	(303)
10	57.7%	45.7%	-14.0%	(142)	:	40.4%	-10.8%	(126)
Modified CBO Model					:			
3	70.7%	60.7%	-11.5%	(179)	:	71.2%	3.3%	(110)
11	64.4%	50.3%	-13.9%	(738)	:	60.9%	-6.5%	(338)
12	66.1%	57.6%	-9.6%	(133)	:	55.4%	-10.6%	(84)
13	75.9%	71.5%	-6.6%	(122)	:	62.9%	-9.6%	(86)
AIDP School-with-CBO Model					:			
2	64.7%	52.8%	-13.6%	(415)	:	56.3%	-9.0%	(278)
4	72.1%	63.2%	-9.4%	(457)	:	50.5%	-20.9%	(260)
9	66.5%	60.5%	-9.1%	(208)	:	60.9%	-9.8%	(186)

TABLE 1-12

Attendance Change over Time, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

STUDENTS IN YEAR THREE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1987-88

School	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)	Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	69.2%	70.7%	-0.1%	(2,711)	65.3%	-6.4%	(4,149)
Modified Systemic Model							
1	82.0%	74.3%	-5.4%	(140)	69.2%	-6.0%	(270)
5	76.5%	71.7%	-4.0%	(302)	66.8%	-5.4%	(413)
6	78.3%	75.0%	-2.6%	(242)	68.7%	-7.7%	(469)
7	64.0%	61.0%	-3.7%	(133)	53.9%	-8.5%	(188)
8	74.1%	74.3%	-1.4%	(265)	70.5%	-4.6%	(410)
10	59.8%	61.4%	0.3%	(223)	54.0%	-8.3%	(290)
Modified CBO Model							
3	68.5%	66.3%	-3.8%	(234)	72.1%	4.1%	(267)
11	68.8%	75.3%	2.8%	(165)	68.4%	-8.3%	(321)
12	70.0%	61.8%	-7.8%	(167)	58.5%	-3.8%	(237)
13	76.3%	77.0%	-4.7%	(77)	69.0%	-7.7%	(127)
AIDP School-with-CBO Model							
2	64.5%	70.2%	0.3%	(242)	63.9%	-7.4%	(396)
4	63.2%	71.5%	8.8%	(321)	61.3%	-11.8%	(427)
9	58.9%	72.7%	11.3%	(200)	67.2%	-6.0%	(334)

Cohort students in 1987-88 (+4.1%). The *Final Report on the High Schools for Year Three* was only able to attribute the attendance gains in School 3 in 1987-88 to the style of staff's support services to students. As in School 38, however, the gain in School 3 was limited to just one year (in comparison to attendance in the prior year) and it applied across the school rather than to program students alone. Results for 1988-89 would help clarify whether the gain was more the result of staff services to students or was an artifact of the system used for recording attendance data during the year in question.

The attendance change in School 5 was consistently a somewhat lower loss than the average loss for the high schools overall, for each cohort in each program year (thus not including the change between 1985-86 and 1986-87 for Third Cohort students, who were not enrolled in the program until 1987-88). School 5 appears to have been relatively more positive for program students' attendance than had been realized in the earlier evaluation reports, which only examined results for each year separately.

Attendance by Cohort and Grade

Tables 1-13 through 1-16 examine the attendance of students from each cohort according to the grade they were in during their initial program year. The only apparent pattern is a tendency for attendance losses to be greatest for 9th grade high school students.

Time in Program

Table 1-17 looks at the attendance outcomes for students with different periods of time in the program. The analysis combines the data for middle school and high school students. Students who were continued or re-enrolled in the program in a later year tended to have had a higher attendance in an earlier year than other students who were not continued or re-enrolled. This may be partly a function of the continuing students being younger in age. It also reflects the fact that the continuing students were survivors, whereas the noncontinuing students included those who were discharged as dropouts during their initial year. It is not evident from the table that continuation in the program resulted in lower attendance *losses* in the second and third years than the losses for students who participated for only one year. One concludes, therefore, that continuation in the program did not itself contribute to, or cause, the higher attendance rates of the students who remained in the program for a second and a third year.

Promotion Rates

The evaluation has found a great deal of inconsistency among the grade levels recorded for students in different Board of Education sources, specifically the grade codes for a given student in contiguous years as recorded in Student Information

TABLE 13

Attendance Change over Time, by Cohort and Grade
DPI Longitudinal Study

STUDENTS IN YEAR ONE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1985-86

Grade	Avg. 1984-85 Attend.	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)		Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change*	(N)		Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	76.9%	73.3%	-3.7%	(3,380)	:	66.9%	-7.8%	(2,875)	:	62.3%	-8.2%	(2,441)
Unsure	73.3%	72.1%	-0.3%	(273)	:	61.7%	-10.3%	(248)	:	55.3%	-8.2%	(203)
7	75.6%	72.6%	-4.1%	(718)	:	68.3%	-6.0%	(611)	:	62.9%	-9.9%	(539)
8	77.7%	74.3%	-3.4%	(1,658)	:	67.0%	-8.0%	(1,383)	:	62.8%	-7.5%	(1,183)
9	77.4%	72.3%	-5.2%	(715)	:	67.4%	-8.0%	(625)	:	63.3%	-8.1%	(508)
Spec Ed	81.4%	72.6%	-8.3%	(16)	:	68.9%	-8.1%	(8)	:	59.7%	-12.4%	(8)

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* For Year 1 students, attendance change after Year 1 and attendance change after Year 2 were based on slightly different computations of 1985-86 attendance.

TABLE 1-14

Attendance Change over Time, by Cohort and Grade
DPI Longitudinal Study

STUDENTS IN YEAR TWO MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1986-87

Grade	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)		Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	77.2%	74.9%	-2.5%	(3,410)	:	67.4%	-8.6%	(3,344)
					:			
Unsure	74.1%	71.3%	-3.5%	(247)	:	61.7%	-11.1%	(227)
7	76.1%	74.2%	-2.4%	(787)	:	68.0%	-6.7%	(947)
8	77.6%	75.2%	-2.4%	(1,739)	:	67.4%	-9.1%	(1,591)
9	78.7%	76.6%	-2.4%	(632)	:	68.6%	-9.5%	(569)
Spec Ed	74.2%	71.8%	-0.2%	(5)	:	67.8%	-4.0%	(9)

Note: One case coded as sixth grade was deleted from this table.

STUDENTS IN YEAR THREE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1987-88

Grade	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)		Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	78.9%	77.5%	-1.6%	(770)	:	74.3%	-3.3%	(3,984)
					:			
Unsure	77.9%	74.8%	-5.2%	(143)	:	68.6%	-6.0%	(340)
7	78.7%	77.4%	-8.2%	(34)	:	75.6%	-2.0%	(903)
8	79.2%	78.6%	-0.4%	(327)	:	76.4%	-2.2%	(1,657)
9	79.0%	79.3%	0.0%	(251)	:	75.1%	-4.1%	(604)
Spec Ed	78.7%	73.8%	-4.8%	(15)	:	67.9%	-6.4%	(480)

TABLE 1-15

Attendance Change over Time, by Cohort and Grade
DPI Longitudinal Study

STUDENTS IN YEAR ONE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1985-86

Grade	Avg. 1984-85 Attend.	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change*	(N)	Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	65.8%	56.4%	-10.6%	(4,835)	55.3%	-7.8%	(3,269)	58.8%	-8.4%	(1,532)
Unsure	67.2%	58.9%	-8.8%	(463)	56.1%	-7.7%	(289)	63.0%	-11.2%	(98)
9	62.7%	53.5%	-11.8%	(2,437)	52.4%	-8.5%	(1,722)	57.7%	-8.3%	(866)
10	69.1%	59.2%	-9.8%	(1,301)	59.0%	-7.0%	(913)	61.0%	-7.9%	(457)
11	73.4%	63.0%	-10.3%	(369)	61.6%	-6.1%	(198)	60.8%	-2.9%	(42)
12	73.4%	64.0%	-8.0%	(107)	58.9%	-7.4%	(27)	45.7%	-18.2%	(8)
Spec Ed	55.6%	51.8%	-6.4%	(158)	54.5%	-6.5%	(119)	51.3%	-11.6%	(61)

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* For Year 1 students, attendance change after Year 1 and attendance change after Year 2 were based on slightly different computations of 1985-86 attendance.

Note: One case coded as 8th grade was deleted from this table.

TABLE 1-16

Attendance Change over Time, by Cohort and Grade
DPI Longitudinal Study

STUDENTS IN YEAR TWO HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1986-87

Grade	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)		Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	68.9%	60.2%	-9.5%	(3,558)	:	59.8%	-9.8%	(2,514)
					:			
Unsure	72.7%	67.0%	-5.0%	(1,074)	:	62.7%	-8.8%	(879)
9	59.6%	51.6%	-14.6%	(881)	:	51.4%	-11.6%	(695)
10	70.3%	60.3%	-11.0%	(898)	:	60.9%	-10.9%	(537)
11	75.6%	68.7%	-6.9%	(383)	:	74.4%	-3.8%	(211)
12	77.2%	70.0%	-7.0%	(95)	:	64.2%	-0.6%	(17)
Spec Ed	67.6%	59.0%	-11.1%	(227)	:	57.3%	-12.5%	(174)

STUDENTS IN YEAR THREE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM, 1987-88

Grade	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)		Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	69.3%	70.7%	-0.1%	(2,695)	:	65.3%	-6.5%	(4,142)
					:			
5	66.5%	67.7%	1.0%	(1,515)	:	62.0%	-6.7%	(2,110)
9	63.4%	66.6%	-2.7%	(355)	:	60.7%	-7.5%	(705)
10	71.2%	74.8%	-3.0%	(293)	:	70.2%	-5.8%	(646)
11	82.9%	83.7%	-0.1%	(238)	:	78.7%	-5.6%	(309)
12	86.4%	86.7%	-0.3%	(115)	:	85.8%	-1.4%	(116)
Spec Ed	72.7%	74.0%	0.3%	(179)	:	68.1%	-6.6%	(256)

TABLE 1-17

Attendance Change, by Time in Program
DPI Longitudinal Study

Time in Program	Avg. 1985-86 Attend.	Avg. 1986-87 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)		Avg. 1987-88 Attend.	Avg. Change	(N)
OVERALL	67.5%	68.15%	-7.1%	(11,926)	:	66.95%	-6.62%	(14,068)
YEAR 1 ONLY	60.0%	60.13%	-8.3%	(3,583)	:	62.84%	-6.98%	(2,254)
YEARS 1 AND 2	68.4%	59.39%	-9.3%	(1,816)	:	57.93%	-11.65%	(1,016)
YEARS 1 AND 3	71.2%	61.21%	-10.1%	(357)	:	56.10%	-6.54%	(321)
YEAR 2 ONLY	74.1%	66.92%	-6.3%	(3,244)	:	64.82%	-9.99%	(2,511)
YEARS 2 AND 3	77.5%	73.67%	-3.1%	(1,439)	:	67.79%	-6.78%	(1,829)
YEAR 3 ONLY	80.8%	75.30%	-9.0%	(911)	:	72.14%	-3.84%	(5,603)
ALL 3 YEARS	70.4%	67.83%	-2.2%	(576)	:	60.19%	-8.36%	(534)
MISSING CASES				(12,151)	:			(10,009)

Service (SIS) files, and then these codes with the grade codes on the rosters of targeted students completed by program facilitators or coordinators. Part of the problem is simply the delay in recording students' promotion, or changing grade level codes on students' records at the central Board of Education. This is reflected in there being the highest proportion of ambiguous or "unsure" cases at the end of 1987-88. Whatever further explanation there may be, the consequence is that we cannot get a good estimate of how many students have been promoted at the end of any year, but especially after Year Two and Year Three.

Tables 1-18 and 1-19 distinguish between "promoted" (advancing a grade or receiving a high school diploma or a GED diploma), "not promoted" (either retained in grade or discharged for a variety of reasons other than a diploma), and "unsure" (inconsistency of grade code or discharged to another school). Some of the cases categorized by us as unsure were no doubt promotions, as others were doubtless still in school but retained in grade.

Table 1-18 shows that 75.4% of the First Cohort middle school students were promoted at the end of the 1985-86 school year. Of those students from this cohort who were promoted and who were still in school in 1986-87, 48.0% were promoted at the end of this second school year. Of the First Cohort students who were not promoted at the end of 1985-86, 54.6% were definitely not promoted at the end of the 1986-87 school year either, while the remaining cases were unsure. It is hard to believe that there would not be a single definite case of promotion after the second year for a student retained in grade at the end of the first year. For many of the cases that are not definite, drop-add codes or grade codes are missing.

At the high school level, 23.1% of the First Cohort students were definitely promoted at the end of 1986-87; 55.5% were definitely not promoted, and 21.4% of cases were unsure. (Table 1-19.) Of the students who were promoted the first year, again only about a quarter, 24.3%, were definitely promoted the second year, while 32.8% were definitely not promoted and 42.9% of the cases were uncertain. Just 3.8% of the students not promoted at the end of the first year were definitely promoted at the end of the second. The overwhelming proportion of the students not promoted the first year, 77.1%, were again not promoted after the second year, while only 19.1% of these cases were unsure.

An analysis presented in the *Final Report on the High Schools for Year Three* showed that just 18% of the targeted students earned 10 or more credits in 1987-88. Supposing that this approximates, or maybe slightly inflates, the proportion of high school students who earned 10 or more credits in Year One, and then allowing that another, smaller fraction of the students who had been retained in grade from the previous year accumulated enough additional credits to be promoted at the end of the program year, a promotion rate of at least 25%, but probably not

TABLE 1-18

Promotions of Year One Middle School Students over Time*
DPI Longitudinal Study

Category	N	%
OVERALL - Yr 1 MS	3644	100.0%
Promoted after Yr 1	2746	75.4%
Not Promoted after Yr 1	168	4.6%
Unsure	730	20.0%
STUDENTS PROMOTED AFTER YEAR ONE	2746	100.0%
Promoted after Yr 2	1240	45.2%
Not Promoted after Yr 2	300	10.9%
Unsure	1206	43.9%
STUDENTS NOT PROMOTED AFTER YEAR ONE	168	100.0%
Promoted after Yr 2	0	--
Not Promoted after Yr 2	65	38.7%
Unsure	103	61.3%
STUDENTS WITH MISSING/UNSURE PROMOTION DATA AFTER YEAR ONE	730	100.0%
Promoted after Yr 2	0	--
Not Promoted after Yr 2	28	3.8%
Unsure	702	96.2%

---

* Students are coded as "Unsure" if there was no data available on grade codes for the relevant years.

TABLE 1-19

Promotions of Year One High School Students over Time
DPI Longitudinal Study

Category	N	%
OVERALL - Yr 1 HS	6027	100.0%
Promoted after Yr 1	1393	23.1%
Not Promoted after Yr 1	3345	55.5%
Unsure	1289	21.4%
STUDENTS PROMOTED AFTER YEAR ONE	1393	100.0%
Promoted after Yr 2	339	24.3%
Not Promoted after Yr 2	457	32.8%
Unsure	597	42.9%
STUDENTS NOT PROMOTED AFTER YEAR ONE	3345	100.0%
Promoted after Yr 2	126	3.8%
Not Promoted after Yr 2	2579	77.1%
Unsure	640	19.1%
STUDENTS WITH MISSING/UNSURE PROMOTION DATA AFTER YEAR ONE	1289	100.0%
Promoted after Yr 2	71	5.5%
Not Promoted after Yr 2	284	22.0%
Unsure	934	72.5%

---

* Students are coded as "Unsure" if there was no data available on grade codes for the relevant years.

more than 30%, seems plausible.

The proportion of unsure cases is too large for the Second and Third Cohorts to report any meaningful findings.

Enrollment Status at the End of the 1987-88 School Year by Cohort.

This analysis answers most directly the question of whether the Dropout Prevention Initiative is meeting the goals of student retention that have been set for the program.

The tables for this analysis report targeted students' enrollment status at the end of the 1987-88 school year, i. e., decisions that were made before the beginning of the 1988-89 year. The tables include the proportions of students in each cohort with missing data; students who are still in school are likely to be overrepresented in missing data, especially for more recent years, so that reporting only the valid cases would overestimate the percents of students discharged as dropouts.

Middle Schools.

At the end of the 1987-88 school year, a few of the First Cohort of middle school targeted students had graduated from high school or received a New York State Equivalency Diploma (the GED), and 63.4% were either still in school or enrolled in a GED program. (Table 1-20.) Clearly the program met the Chancellor's goal that "Starting with 1985-86 as a baseline year, a minimum of 50 percent of the students ninth grade or below, provided with dropout prevention services will still be in school three years later." (Special Circular #37, May 8, 1987.) Only 13.8% of the First Cohort students had been discharged as dropouts by the end of 1987-88. Whether or not this presages a lower dropout rate as these students progress through high school cannot be known definitively until results are available for a later point in time, say the end of the 1989-90 school year. However, the attendance results that have already been reported above suggest that the dropout rate in high school will be quite high.

Table 1-21 gives a more specific handle on this question by examining the enrollment status for each middle school grade separately in each cohort. One percent (1%) of the students who were in the 9th grade in a middle school in 1985-86 had graduated or received a GED by the end of 1987-88 and 59.3% were still in school or in a GED program. A much higher proportion of the Second Cohort middle school ninth grade students were still in school or a GED program at the end of 1987-88, 80.6%. However, this was the end of only the first year after they were in the program, and for most the end of their first year in high school; so the dropout discharge process would have been just starting to accelerate for this cohort.

Figures 1-3 through 1-6 depict the status of targeted

TABLE 1-20

Enrollment Status at the End of 1987-88 School Year, by Cohort
DPI Longitudinal Study

Enrollment Status	Year 1: 1985-86		Year 2: 1986-87		Year 3: 1987-88	
	Percent	(N)	Percent	(N)	Percent	(N)
MIDDLE SCHOOLS						
Dropout, Yr 1	0.0%	(1)	0.0%	(0)	0.0%	(0)
Dropout, Yr 2	2.9%	(124)	0.2%	(6)	0.0%	(0)
Dropout, Yr 3	10.9%	(470)	3.0%	(117)	0.1%	(3)
Non-Dropout Discharge	6.8%	(295)	2.4%	(95)	0.0%	(2)
Still in Schl	62.0%	(2,685)	72.0%	(2,824)	45.2%	(2,150)
Graduated	0.1%	(5)	0.0%	(0)	0.0%	(0)
Enrolled GED	1.4%	(62)	0.3%	(13)	0.0%	(0)
Rec'd GED	0.4%	(18)	0.0%	(1)	0.0%	(0)
(Missing)	15.5%	(670)	22.1%	(866)	54.7%	(2,597)
TOTAL	100.0%	(4,330)	100.0%	(3,922)	100.0%	(4,752)
HIGH SCHOOLS						
Dropout, Yr 1	15.8%	(1,087)	0.0%	(2)	0.0%	(0)
Dropout, Yr 2	20.6%	(1,424)	10.5%	(510)	0.0%	(0)
Dropout, Yr 3	14.3%	(985)	21.6%	(1,047)	15.1%	(720)
Non-Dropout Discharge	10.5%	(722)	8.5%	(412)	4.9%	(236)
Still in Schl	7.6%	(522)	24.9%	(1,210)	50.6%	(2,421)
Graduated	7.9%	(547)	7.5%	(363)	4.5%	(215)
Enrolled GED	4.8%	(334)	2.7%	(130)	1.9%	(92)
Red'd GED	6.9%	(477)	4.8%	(231)	2.8%	(135)
(Missing)	11.6%	(800)	19.6%	(949)	20.1%	(962)
TOTAL	100.0%	(6,898)	100.0%	(4,854)	100.0%	(4,781)

TABLE 1-21

Enrollment Status at End of 1987-88 School Year, by Cohort and Grade Level DPI Longitudinal Study

YEAR ONE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS (Total = 4076)

Enrollment Status	Grade in Program Year: 7th	Terminal 8th	Not Term 8th*	Not Term 9th*	Special Ed	Unsure
Grade Total	(1118)	(656)	(1174)	(810)	(19)	(299)
Dropout, Yr 1				0.1%		
Dropout, Yr 2	0.2%	2.6%	3.2%	5.9%		5.4%
Dropout, Yr 3	4.1%	8.2%	12.1%	16.5%	5.3%	21.7%
Non-Dropout Discharge	4.2%	4.7%	9.5%	8.1%	10.5%	8.7%
Still in Schl	66.5%	67.5%	64.9%	57.0%	42.1%	57.2%
Graduated				0.4%		0.7%
Enrolled GED	0.3%	0.9%	2.2%	2.3%		2.0%
Received GED	0.2%	0.3%	0.5%	0.6%		1.0%
(Missing)	24.6%	15.7%	7.5%	8.9%	42.1%	3.3%

(Note: One case coded as non-terminal 9th grade was deleted.)

YEAR TWO MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS (Total = 3915)

Enrollment Status	Grade in Program Year: 7th	Terminal 8th	Not Term 8th*	Not Term 9th*	Special Ed	Unsure
Grade Total	(1115)	(614)	(1243)	(674)	(9)	(259)
Dropout, Yr 1						
Dropout, Yr 2			0.1%	0.3%		1.2%
Dropout, Yr 3	0.7%	1.5%	3.1%	7.6%		3.9%
Non-Dropout Discharge	0.2%	1.3%	4.4%	3.0%		3.9%
Still in Schl	60.3%	70.8%	77.1%	79.4%	55.6%	84.6%
Graduated						
Enrolled GED			0.2%	1.2%		0.8%
Received GED			0.1%			
(Missing)	38.8%	26.4%	15.0%	8.6%	44.4%	5.8%

(Note: One case coded as sixth grade was deleted.)

(continued)

TABLE 1-21, continued

Enrollment Status at End of 1987-88 School Year,
by Cohort and Grade Level
DPI Longitudinal Study

Enrollment Status	Grade in Program Year 7th	Terminal 8th	Not Term 8th*	Not Term 9th*	Special Ed	Unsure
YEAR THREE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS (Total = 4314)						
Grade Total	(1147)	(564)	(1118)	(608)	(531)	(346)
Dropout, Yr 1						
Dropout, Yr 2						
Dropout, Yr 3				0.2%		
Non-Dropout Discharge					0.2%	0.3%
Still in Schl	0.3%	13.5%	86.1%	85.4%	40.7%	86.1%
Graduated						
Enrolled GED						
Received GED						
(Missing)	99.7%	86.5%	13.9%	14.5%	59.1%	13.6%

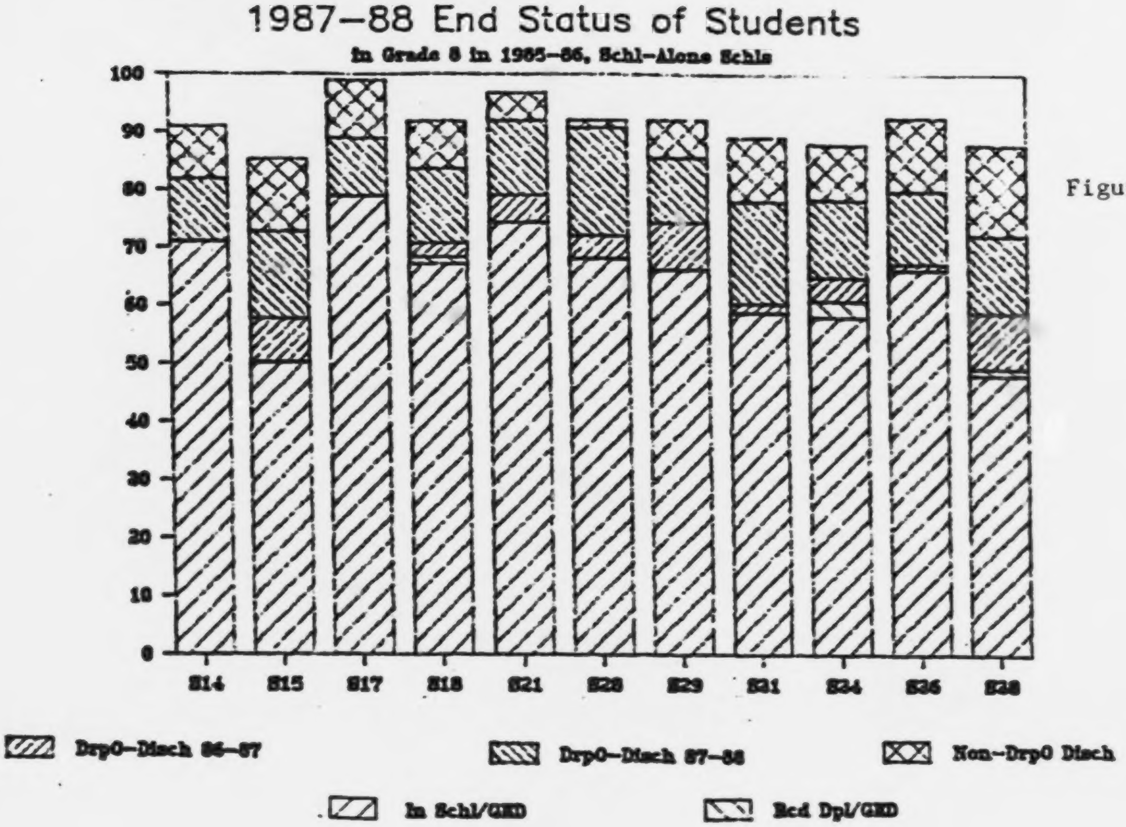

Figure 1-3

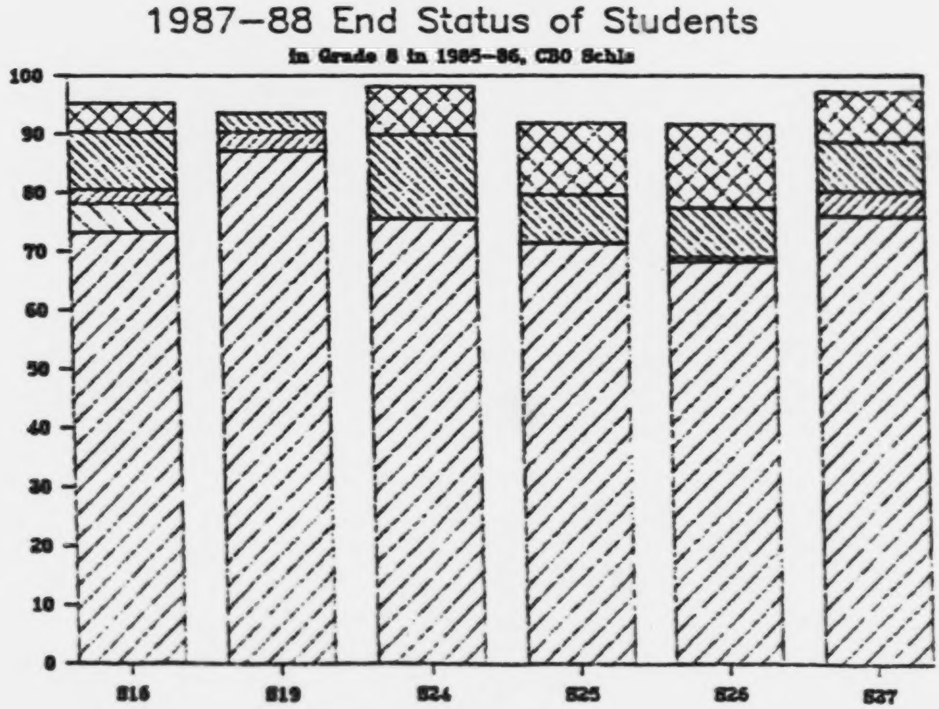

Figure 1-4

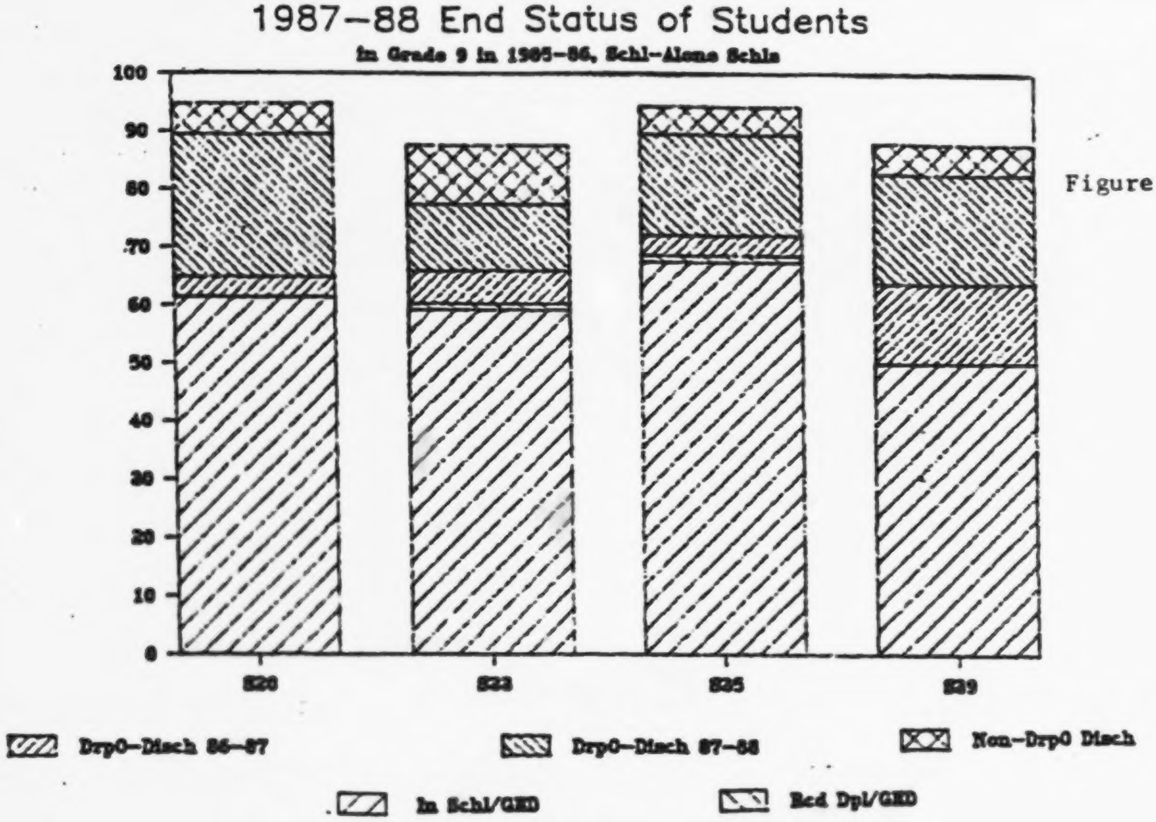

Figure 1-5

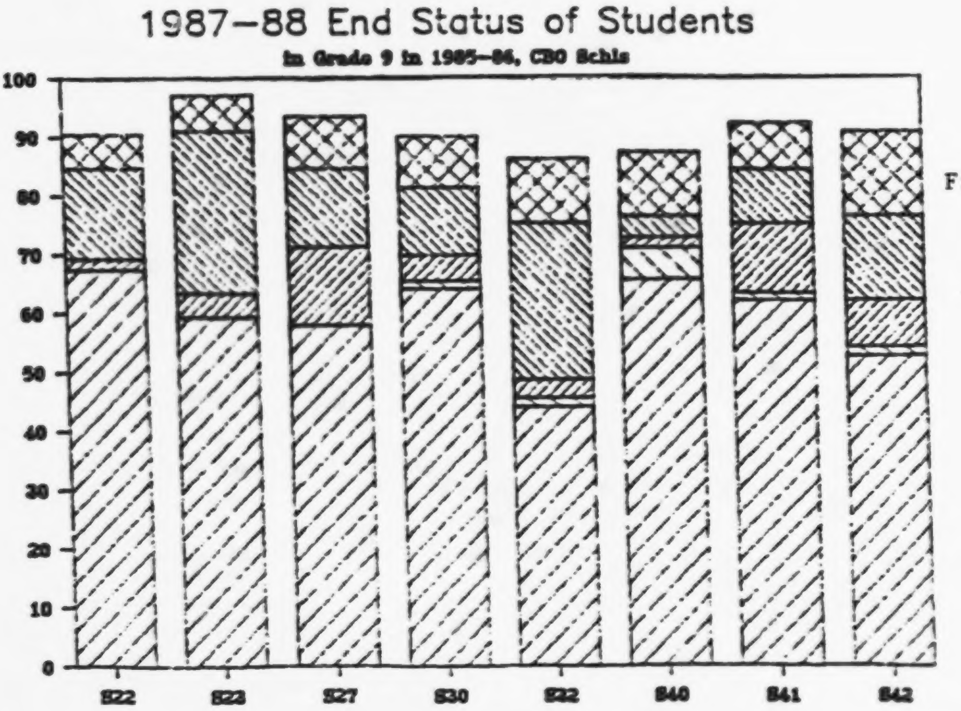

Figure 1-6

students who were in their terminal year in middle school in 1985-86, either in grade 9 or in a terminal 8th grade. The results are shown for each school separately, and the schools are grouped by grade level and by model, i. e., by whether the grades were located in a School-Alone model school or in a CBO model school.
The differences between the column totals and 100% represent missing data. More students remained in school from the CBO model terminal 8th grades than from the School-Alone model terminal 8th grades; however, this pattern did not obtain for students from the 9th grades.

It is apparent that, as one would expect, fewer terminal grade 8 students had been discharged as dropouts than 9th grade students. At the same time, there were greater variations between schools within the four groupings than across them. The principal function of the figures is to illustrate the kind of profile that could be generated for individual middle schools and that might provide them with information to improve high school selection and linkage, as well as the general preparation of students for high school. On inspection of results for the first two cohorts (figures for the Second Cohort are not included in the report, but have been examined), certain schools ranked high both times in proportion of students still in school. Among schools with a 9th grade, these included School 30, School 35, and School 40. Among schools with a terminal 8th grade, those with relatively high proportions of students remaining in school were Schools 17 and School 19. We notice that all 5 of these schools ranked in the upper half of the middle schools in a regression analysis that determined the relative differences among schools in adjusted average attendance rates for Year Two, controlling on prior year attendance; Schools 17 and 19 were written up as exceptional attendance gain schools in the Final Report on the Middle Schools for Year Two.

Tables 1-22 through 1-24 report the enrollment status of each cohort of targeted students at the end of 1987-88 for each middle school.

High Schools.

By the end of 1987-88, 14.8% of the First Cohort of targeted high school students had graduated from high school or received a GED and another 12.4% were still in school or were enrolled in a GED program. At the same time, 50.7% had been discharged as dropouts, beginning in the program year (15.8%), then at a higher rate in the following year (20.6%), and at the initial rate in the second year after the program (14.3%). Finally, 10.5% of the First Cohort students had received a non-dropout discharge and data were missing for 11.6% of the students. (Table 1-20 and Figures 1-7 and 1-8.)

By the end of 1987-88, almost the same proportion of Second Cohort students (12.3%) had graduated from high school or received a GED, and a larger proportion than of First Cohort

TABLE 1-22

Enrollment Status at End of 1987-88, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

School	N	Dropout Yr 1	Dropout Yr 2	Dropout Yr 3	Non-Dropout Disch.	Still in School	Grad.	Enroll GEL	Rec'd GED	(Missing)
YEAR ONE MIDDLE SCHOOLS										
OVERALL	4330		2.9%	10.9%	6.8%	62.0%	0.1%	1.4%	0.4%	15.5%
School-Alone Model										
14	107			6.5%	4.7%	76.6%		1.9%		10.3%
15	152		4.6%	10.5%	9.2%	50.7%		4.6%		20.4%
17	161			10.6%	7.5%	67.1%		2.5%		12.4%
18	173		2.3%	13.9%	5.8%	58.4%		1.7%	1.2%	16.8%
20	135		3.0%	17.8%	8.9%	57.0%		0.7%	0.7%	11.9%
21	147		2.7%	10.2%	3.4%	66.7%		3.4%		13.6%
28	163		1.8%	16.6%	3.7%	60.1%		1.2%		16.6%
29	148		3.4%	10.8%	4.7%	64.2%			0.7%	16.2%
31	155		1.9%	8.4%	5.8%	57.4%			1.3%	25.2%
33	165		4.8%	9.1%	7.9%	61.8%	0.6%	3.6%		12.1%
34	161		1.9%	11.8%	10.6%	54.7%		2.5%	1.2%	17.4%
35	164		1.8%	11.6%	5.5%	63.4%		4.3%	1.2%	12.2%
36	155		0.6%	9.7%	9.0%	65.8%		0.6%		14.2%
38	163		6.1%	7.4%	13.5%	57.1%		0.6%	0.6%	14.7%
39	145	0.7%	7.6%	13.1%	5.5%	44.1%		2.8%		26.2%
School-with-CBO Model										
16	128		0.8%	7.8%	6.3%	62.5%			1.6%	21.1%
19	65		1.5%	4.6%	4.6%	78.5%				10.8%
22	153		2.0%	9.8%	4.6%	62.7%		1.3%	0.7%	19.0%
23	186		2.2%	19.4%	4.3%	65.6%		0.5%		8.1%
24	122			7.4%	4.1%	68.9%		2.5%		17.2%
25	171		1.8%	6.4%	7.0%	66.7%		1.2%		17.0%
26	219		0.5%	6.8%	9.1%	72.6%				11.0%
27	117		5.1%	8.5%	8.5%	61.5%	0.9%	0.9%		14.5%
30	161		1.9%	10.6%	4.3%	70.8%			0.6%	11.8%
32	149		4.0%	16.1%	7.4%	44.3%	0.7%	0.7%		26.8%
37	160		1.9%	11.3%	6.3%	68.8%		0.6%		11.3%
40	98		3.1%	5.1%	10.2%	67.3%	2.0%	1.0%	1.0%	10.2%
41	159		8.8%	11.3%	5.7%	57.9%		1.9%	0.6%	13.8%
42	148		6.8%	14.2%	8.1%	54.7%			0.7%	15.5%

TABLE 1-23

Enrollment Status at End of 1987-88, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

School	N	Dropout Yr 1	Dropout Yr 2	Dropout Yr 3	Non-Dropout Disch.	Still in School	Grad.	Enroll GED	Rec'd GED	(Missing)
YEAR TWO MIDDLE SCHOOLS										
OVERALL	3922		0.2%	3.0%	2.4%	72.0%		0.3%		22.1%
School-Alone Model										
14	130				1.5%	75.4%				23.1%
15	131		0.8%	5.3%	3.8%	73.3%		0.8%		16.0%
17	164				1.2%	74.4%				24.4%
18	174			4.0%	2.3%	77.0%		1.1%		15.5%
20	147			5.4%	1.4%	70.7%		0.7%		21.8%
21	143		0.7%	2.8%	1.4%	68.5%		0.7%		25.9%
28	172			3.5%	2.3%	67.4%				26.7%
29	160			4.4%	1.9%	66.9%				26.9%
31	133			1.5%	4.5%	79.7%			0.8%	13.5%
33	156			2.6%	2.6%	85.9%		1.9%		7.1%
34	95			1.1%		72.6%				26.3%
35	146			2.1%	1.4%	80.8%		0.7%		15.1%
36	156			1.3%	1.9%	83.3%				13.5%
38	152			1.3%	5.9%	71.7%				21.1%
39	175			5.7%	1.7%	55.4%		1.1%		36.0%
School-with-CBO Model										
16	101			1.0%	4.0%	68.3%				26.7%
19	99			2.0%	3.0%	69.7%				25.3%
22	110			4.5%	2.7%	66.4%				26.4%
23	49			2.0%	4.1%	85.7%				8.2%
24	137			0.7%	2.2%	74.5%				22.6%
25	161		1.2%	3.1%	2.5%	56.5%				36.6%
26	234			1.7%	2.1%	75.6%				20.5%
27	102			4.9%	2.0%	75.5%				17.6%
30	114			3.5%	0.9%	80.7%				14.9%
32	106			5.7%	4.7%	66.0%				23.6%
37	115			1.7%	5.2%	66.1%				27.0%
40	106			1.9%	2.8%	81.1%				14.2%
41	150		1.3%	8.7%	0.7%	71.3%		0.7%		17.3%
42	104			2.9%	1.9%	52.9%		1.0%		41.3%

TABLE 1-24

Enrollment Status at End of 1987-88, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

School	N	Dropout Yr 1	Dropout Yr 2	Dropout Yr 3	Non-Dropout Disch.	Still in School	Grad.	Enroll GED	Rec'd GED	(Missing)
YEAR THREE MIDDLE SCHOOLS										
OVERALL	4752			0.1%		45.2%				54.7%
School-Alone Model										
14	215					26.5%				73.5%
15	196					50.0%				50.0%
17	140					50.0%				50.0%
18	186			0.5%		46.8%				52.7%
20	188					40.4%				59.6%
21	167					33.5%				66.5%
28	174			0.6%		52.3%				47.1%
29	177					44.1%				55.9%
31	215					54.9%				45.1%
33	186					59.7%				40.3%
34	156					48.1%				51.9%
35	181					50.8%				48.6%
36	241					42.7%				57.3%
38	174					46.6%				53.4%
39	175			0.6%		44.6%				54.9%
School-with-CBO Model										
16	104					53.8%				46.2%
19	108					54.6%				45.4%
22	128					30.5%				69.5%
23	129					47.3%				52.7%
24	173					33.5%				66.5%
25	181					42.5%				57.5%
26	241					48.5%				51.5%
27	110					40.0%				60.0%
30	109					81.7%				18.3%
32	119					38.7%				61.3%
37	142					54.9%				45.1%
40	120					43.3%				56.7%
41	208				0.5%	34.6%				64.9%
42	109					28.4%				71.6%

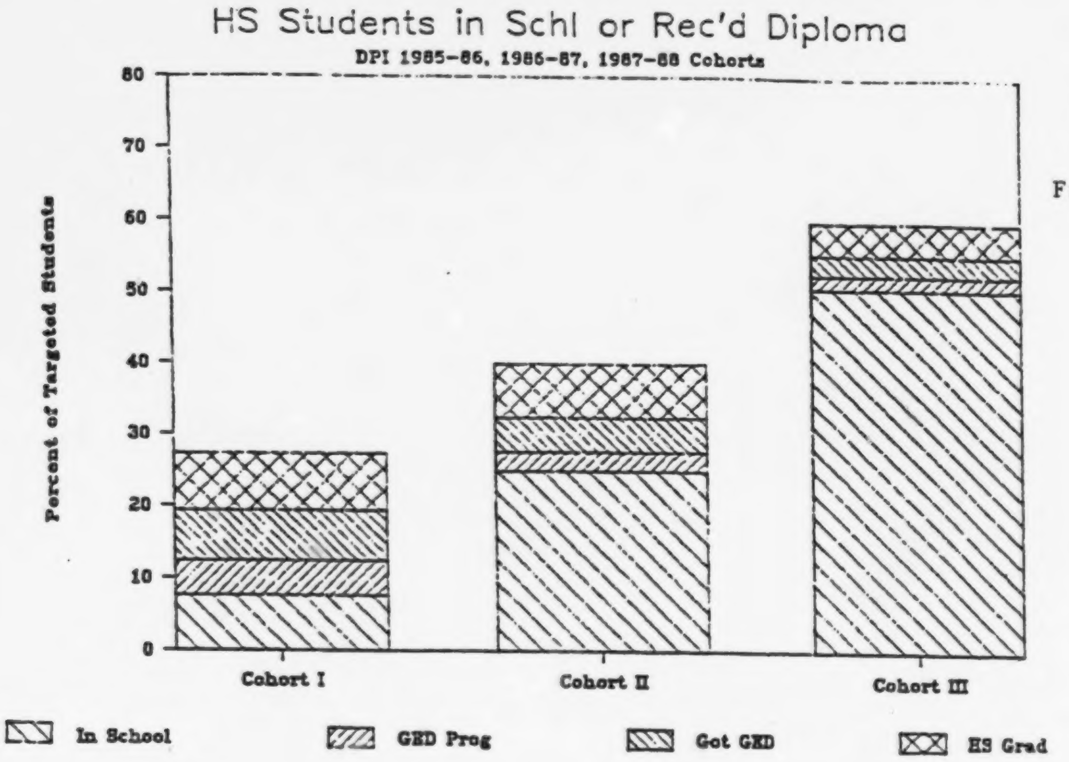

Figure 1-7

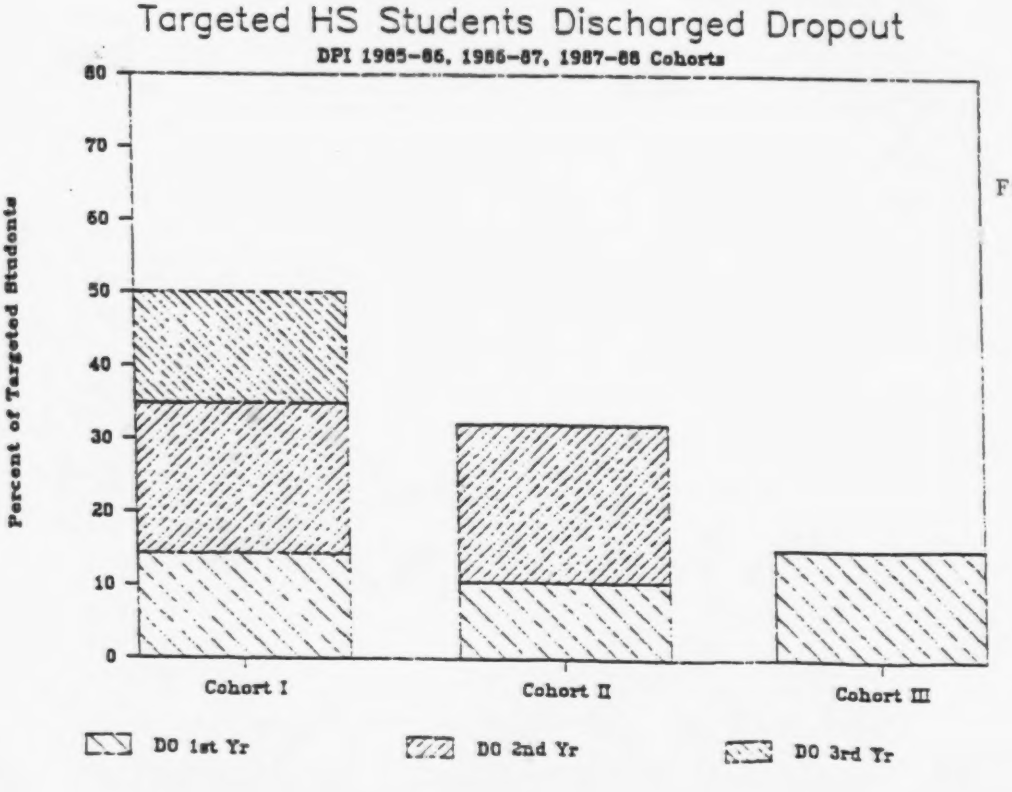

Figure 1-8

students were still in school or enrolled in a GED program (27.6%). The dropout rate for the Second Cohort was lower in the initial year (10.5%) than it had been for the First Cohort (15.8%). However, the Year Two evaluation established that the lists of students had been largely cleared of fall dropouts and LTAs in five of the schools, and the resulting dropout rate was judged to be an underestimation. The findings in Table 1-20 support this conclusion. (1) The dropout rate for the Second Cohort students is virtually the same the year after they were in the program (21.6%) as the rate for the First Cohort students their first year after the program (20.6%). (2) The dropout rate for the Third Cohort students, for whom as in Year One the lists were established in the fall, was about the same in their program year (15.1%) as the rate had been for the First Cohort students in their initial year (15.8%). Thus it appears that the First Cohort does presage a pattern that is developing for the later students. This is congruent with the attendance results reported above.

Tables 1-25 through 1-27 and Figures 1-9 and 1-10 show the enrollment status at the end of 1987-88 for the students of each cohort from each high school. High School 5 is found to have had the largest proportion of targeted students graduate from high school in the First Cohort (22.6%) and the Third Cohort (10.8%), and the second largest proportion in the Second Cohort (18.9%), after School 1 (20.3%). The evaluation established in Year One that School 5 deliberately targeted students that they thought were in the upper range of eligibility, for whom extra support from the program might make a critical difference. The short-run cost of this policy was found to be a relatively high attendance loss, which was attributed by the evaluation to regression to the mean, relative to students in other high schools. Whether or not the students' attendance could have been increased by some untried intervention cannot be said. However, the long-run payoff of the student selection and perhaps the program's work with the students may be the higher graduation rate found at High School 5, not just in the first, but in all three cohorts.

It can also be seen from Tables 1-25 through 1-27 that High School 4 had an exceptionally high proportion of targeted students complete the GED, from the First Cohort (18.4%), the Second Cohort (16.0%), and the Third Cohort (13.5%) alike. As discussed in the Final Report on the High Schools for Year Three, High School 4 was, in 1987-88, the only one of the DPI schools to have a New York State approved GED program at the school. Other schools have since followed their example. Why High School 9 had a relatively high proportion of students complete the GED from the First Cohort (14.7%), but not from later cohorts, is not known to the evaluation.

A perplexing but important question arises from the data in Table 1-20. Calculating from these data we find that 6.8% of the high school students targeted in the first three cohorts graduated from high school, and 5.1% completed the GED, but only 3.4% were discharged to a GED program. One needs to know more

TABLE 1-25

Enrollment Status at End of 1987-88, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

School	N	Dropout Yr 1	Dropout Yr 2	Dropout Yr 3	Non-Dropout Disch.	Still in School	Grad.	Enroll GED	Rec'd GED	(Missing)
YEAR ONE HIGH SCHOOLS										
OVERALL	6898	15.8%	20.6%	14.3%	10.5%	7.6%	7.9%	4.8%	6.9%	11.6%
Modified Systemic Model										
1	449	16.7%	24.7%	9.1%	10.2%	5.3%	8.2%	5.8%	7.6%	12.2%
5	632	14.2%	16.0%	13.9%	12.3%	5.4%	22.6%	3.2%	5.4%	7.0%
6	492	14.4%	13.8%	17.5%	9.6%	12.4%	2.2%	8.9%	2.0%	19.1%
7	581	19.4%	19.1%	13.9%	8.1%	6.5%	10.7%	1.9%	6.4%	13.9%
8	1065	20.3%	17.8%	11.4%	11.8%	6.9%	5.8%	10.5%	4.8%	10.7%
10	494	24.3%	20.2%	9.3%	12.6%	7.1%	4.7%	5.9%	3.2%	12.8%
Modified CBO Model										
3	252	17.1%	18.3%	27.8%	7.1%	9.5%	4.0%	1.2%	6.3%	8.7%
11	456	18.2%	22.8%	16.9%	8.3%	14.0%	7.7%	1.8%	3.3%	7.0%
12	472	3.6%	18.6%	21.2%	15.5%	11.4%	5.3%	0.8%	7.8%	15.7%
13	191	6.3%	29.3%	15.7%	12.0%	6.3%	5.8%	2.6%	5.2%	16.8%
AIDP School-with-CBO Model										
2	727	10.6%	33.3%	12.8%	8.8%	4.4%	6.2%	2.5%	4.5%	16.9%
4	659	18.7%	18.8%	11.4%	9.7%	7.0%	6.5%	4.6%	18.4%	5.0%
9	428	11.0%	19.4%	18.0%	8.4%	5.8%	9.3%	5.6%	14.7%	7.7%

TABLE 1-26

Enrollment Status at End of 1987-88, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

School	N	Dropout Yr 1	Dropout Yr 2	Dropout Yr 3	Non-Dropout Disch.	Still in School	Grad.	Enroll GED	Rec'd GED	(Missing)
YEAR TWO HIGH SCHOOLS										
OVERALL	4854		10.5%	21.6%	8.5%	24.9%	7.5%	2.7%	4.8%	19.6%
Modified Systemic Model										
1	153		5.2%	7.8%	10.5%	34.0%	20.3%	3.3%	3.3%	15.7%
5	444		7.9%	20.0%	6.8%	18.0%	18.9%	2.3%	2.9%	23.2%
6	425		6.4%	23.3%	6.4%	35.1%	1.6%	6.1%	2.4%	18.8%
7	176		3.4%	21.6%	4.5%	31.3%	9.7%	1.1%	2.8%	25.6%
8	509		6.1%	24.0%	8.3%	23.4%	8.1%	4.3%	1.8%	24.2%
10	222		9.9%	18.0%	15.3%	28.8%		3.2%	0.5%	24.3%
Modified CBO Model										
3	212		9.0%	30.2%	8.5%	25.9%	6.1%	1.9%	3.8%	14.6%
11	923		15.6%	22.8%	9.3%	24.8%	7.8%	1.2%	2.6%	15.9%
12	152		1.3%	30.3%	11.8%	22.4%	7.2%		9.2%	17.8%
13	202		12.9%	18.3%	14.9%	24.3%	8.9%	1.5%	2.0%	16.8%
AIDP School-with-CBO Model										
2	505		16.4%	15.4%	4.8%	23.0%	4.4%	2.6%	3.8%	29.7%
4	600	0.2%	13.0%	19.0%	10.2%	20.8%	4.7%	3.8%	16.0%	12.3%
9	331		8.8%	29.6%	5.4%	25.1%	5.7%	1.2%	6.9%	17.2%

TABLE 1-27

Enrollment Status at End of 1987-88, by Cohort and School
DPI Longitudinal Study

School	N	Dropout Yr 1	Dropout Yr 2	Dropout Yr 3	Non-Dropout Disch.	Still in School	Grad.	Enroll GED	Rec'd GED	(Missing)
YEAR THREE HIGH SCHOOLS										
OVERALL	4781			15.1%	4.9%	50.6%	4.5%	1.9%	2.8%	20.1%
Modified Systemic Model										
1	321			10.9%	4.0%	49.8%	7.8%	4.7%	2.2%	20.6%
5	465			21.7%	4.9%	34.2%	10.8%	1.3%	1.3%	25.8%
6	568			15.5%	5.3%	53.9%	6.9%	3.2%	0.7%	14.6%
7	224			13.4%	6.3%	57.6%	4.0%	1.8%	2.2%	14.7%
8	445			12.6%	4.7%	50.1%	6.5%	2.7%	0.4%	22.9%
10	334			11.7%	8.1%	50.9%	0.9%	4.2%	0.6%	23.7%
Modified CBO Model										
3	317			21.5%	6.6%	52.7%	1.9%	0.9%	0.6%	15.8%
11	351			11.1%	2.6%	67.2%	3.1%	0.9%	0.3%	14.8%
12	273			20.9%	7.3%	46.9%	3.3%	0.4%	5.1%	16.1%
13	165			18.8%	6.1%	53.9%	2.4%	0.6%	1.2%	17.0%
AIDP School-with-CBO Model										
2	429			5.8%	2.3%	55.2%	2.1%	0.5%	2.3%	31.7%
4	517			17.8%	4.8%	44.1%	2.3%	1.9%	13.5%	15.5%
9	372			15.9%	3.5%	50.8%	2.4%	0.8%	2.7%	23.9%

TABLE 1-28

Enrollment Status at End of 1987-88 School Year, by Cohort and Grade Level DPI Longitudinal Study

Enrollment	Grade in Program Year					
Status	9th	10th	11th	12th	Spec Ed	Unsure
YEAR ONE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS (Total = 6661)						
Grade Total	(3289)	(1833)	(553)	(145)	(247)	(594)
Dropout, Yr 1	15.8%	16.9%	18.8%	13.1%	20.2%	11.8%
Dropout, Yr 2	21.2%	18.7%	15.6%	9.7%	21.1%	30.2%
Dropout, Yr 3	17.9%	11.7%	6.5%	2.8%	14.6%	11.6%
Non-Dropout Discharge	10.7%	9.1%	11.2%	12.4%	17.8%	7.5%
Still in Schl	9.2%	6.5%	3.6%	2.1%	4.0%	7.4%
Graduated	1.0%	10.0%	29.5%	47.6%	4.9%	11.5%
Enrolled GED	6.0%	4.0%	5.1%		4.0%	3.7%
Received GED	3.9%	11.8%	5.6%	6.9%	1.2%	13.0%
(Missing)	14.3%	11.2%	4.2%	5.5%	12.1%	3.4%
YEAR TWO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS (Total = 4689)						
Grade Total	(1529)	(1079)	(412)	(102)	(318)	(1249)
Dropout, Yr 1	0.1%				0.3%	
Dropout, Yr 2	12.4%	11.9%	11.2%	6.9%	12.9%	6.2%
Dropout, Yr 3	25.5%	23.7%	16.0%	13.7%	21.7%	18.6%
Non-Dropout Discharge	10.9%	6.5%	7.5%	2.0%	16.4%	6.3%
Still in Schl	35.6%	23.7%	6.6%	9.8%	19.2%	24.2%
Graduated	0.2%	1.9%	32.5%	59.8%	3.1%	10.7%
Enrolled GED	4.3%	2.6%	0.7%		1.6%	2.3%
Received GED	2.3%	6.6%	3.9%	4.9%	0.6%	3.4%
(Missing)	8.9%	23.2%	21.6%	2.9%	24.2%	28.4%

(continued)

TABLE 1-28, continued

Enrollment Status at End of 1987-88 School Year, by Cohort and Grade Level DPI Longitudinal Study

Enrollment Status	Grade in Program Year					
	9th	10th	11th	12th	Spec Ed	Unsure
YEAR THREE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS (Total = 4740)						
Grade Total	(866)	(754)	(343)	(127)	(288)	(2362)
Dropout, Yr 1						
Dropout, Yr 2						
Dropout, Yr 3	15.8%	11.5%	9.0%	1.6%	15.6%	17.1%
Non-Dropout Discharge	5.4%	3.4%	3.8%	3.9%	11.1%	4.8%
Still in Schl	63.3%	63.9%	36.7%	3.9%	37.8%	48.6%
Graduated	0.2%	0.3%	7.6%	69.3%	2.4%	3.8%
Enrolled GED	2.3%	0.9%	0.3%		1.0%	2.6%
Received GED	2.5%	4.8%	5.8%	1.6%	0.3%	1.9%
(Missing)	10.4%	15.1%	36.7%	19.7%	31.6%	21.2%

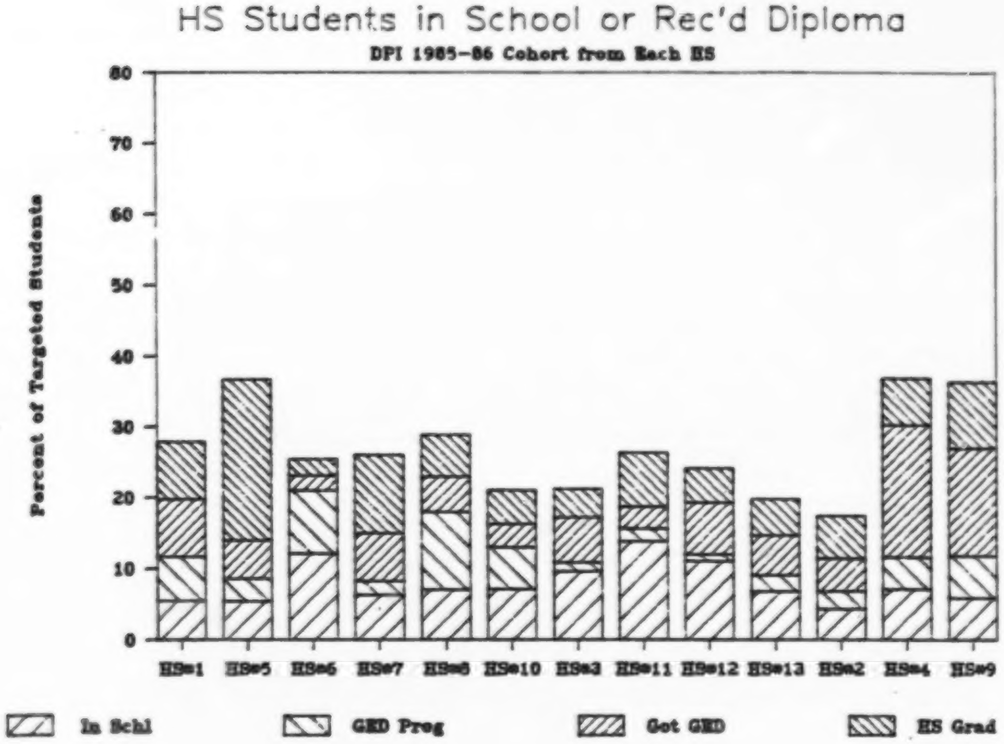

Figure 1-9

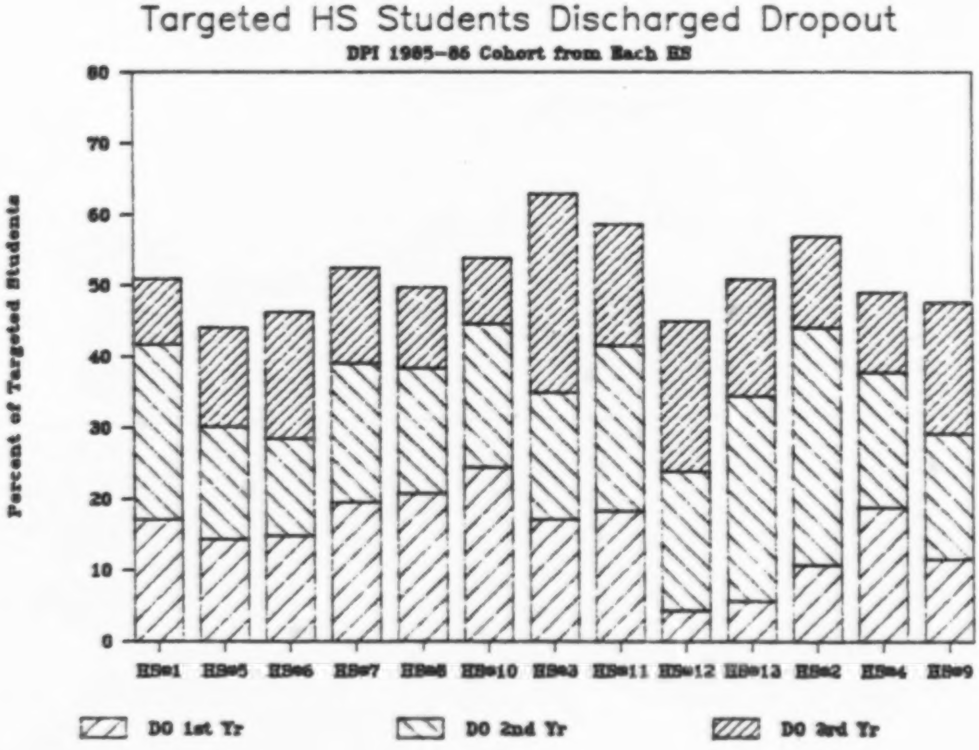

Figure 1-10

about the process that led to students' receiving the GED, specifically how could there be a larger proportion receiving the degree than discharged to the program? Obviously, students who received the degree at time *b* had to have been enrolled at some earlier time *a*; but why would not a continuous process of enrolling new students result in more students being discharged into the GED than the number that receive the degree? Part of the process may be that Operation Success students remained enrolled in their high schools while they took classes to prepare them for the GED. Whatever the answer to this is, it would appear that the GED route has so far been more efficient than the regular school route for highly at-risk students to complete their education at the secondary level.

Every high school should be able to examine the outcomes for its students in each cohort, to trace the history of the program in the school as it might have affected these outcomes, and to identify possible new points of intervention.

Table 1-28 shows the enrollment status of targeted high school students from each grade in each program year at the end of the 1987-88 school year. In addition to Grades 9 through 12 and Special Education, the tables include a column labeled "Unsure" to represent the students whose grade code in the program year (1985-86 for the First Cohort) was ambiguous in the data. For the First Cohort, the proportion of students receiving a high school diploma or a GED was highest for students who were in the 12th grade in 1985-86 (54.5%), next highest for 11th grade (35.1%), at intermediate levels for unsure grade (24.5%) and 10th grade (21.8%), and lowest for special education (6.1%) and 9th grade (4.9%).

The cumulative dropout discharge rates for First Cohort students were highest for students who were in Special Education (55.9%) and the 9th grade (54.9%), progressively lower for students who were in the 10th grade (47.3%), unsure grade (43.6%), and 11th grade (40.9%), and lowest for students who were in the 12th grade (25.6%). It is particularly distressing that students who had survived in the high schools to the 11th and even the 12th grades were discharged as dropouts at such high rates, especially considering that they were targeted for services in a dropout prevention program. For 11th and 12th grade students in the Second Cohort, the dropout rates in their program year were lower than for the First Cohort, in line with the overall reduction of rates associated with the late rosters in 1986-87; however, the rates in the year following the program year are as high for the Second Cohort as the rates for the First Cohort in their first year following the program. For the Third Cohort, lower proportions of 11th and, especially, 12th grade students were discharged in their initial program year than had been the case for either the First or the Second Cohorts, and a substantially higher proportion of 12th grade students graduated (69.3%). Thus the earlier trend might have been improved at these grade levels in 1987-88.

Adding the proportions of students who were still in school, were in a GED program, had graduated, or had received a GED, 20.1% of the students in the 9th grade in the high schools in 1985-86 can be said to have been still in school or to have completed their secondary education by the end of 1987-88. Even if all of the students with missing data or who were non-dropout discharges had continued in school, the proportion in school at the start of the third school year following the program year would have fallen short of the Chancellor's goal of 50%. With only 42.4% of the Second Cohort 9th graders still in school or having a diploma at the beginning of the second year after they were in the program, it is clear that the Chancellor's goal will not be met for them either.

Conclusion

The Dropout Prevention Initiative in its first three years, 1985-86 through 1987-88, was for most targeted students a limited encounter that clearly did not stem the erosion of their attendance or increase their prospects for completing school. Even in the face of these results, the action of setting goals for student retention can be said to have been valid. The goals must serve as a reference point for utilizing feedback from this evaluation and other sources. What is needed in each school is not only a gleaning of elements tried in the program so far--flexible scheduling, part-time jobs, crisis counseling and case management, preparation for GED--but an orientation to the goals themselves and to data that will inform planning to meet the goals.

The targets for specific years will have to include short-range as well as long-range goals for improvement. These goals must be owned by all staff and parents of the students' schools, not just by the dropout prevention support staff alone. The Board of Education should develop the capacity, within each school and amplified at the central level, to generate profiles for individual schools that pertain more closely to the students now on register and incoming, and that respond to questions asked by school-based planning teams themselves: about programs, activities, and the general environment of the school, and how all of these impact on the students' attendance and achievement. Only with a clear picture of what is happening to the students over time can planning teams set goals that are both attainable and challenging for increasing student retention and school completion.

Chapter Two

THE PROCESSES USED BY HIGH SCHOOLS TO MONITOR STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND DISCHARGE STUDENTS

Carolyn J. Riehl

One of the Chancellor's primary objectives for the Dropout Prevention Initiative was to reduce the dropout rate at each of the program schools. A guiding assumption of the Initiative was that if schools could improve the instructional and support services they offer to students, students would be motivated to attend more often and to refrain from dropping out. In earlier evaluation reports, we have examined a range of evidence about the effectiveness of instructional and support services implemented through the Initiative. In this chapter, we focus on a somewhat more administrative aspect of the program and examine, first, whether the Initiative resulted in significant changes in schools' attendance office operations and, second, whether those changes were associated with changes in student dropout rates.

High school attendance offices in New York City are typically staffed with an attendance coordinator (usually a teacher who is released from instructional duties for several periods a day to manage the attendance office); an attendance teacher (a part-time or full-time staff member, hired by the Bureau of Attendance); one or more paraprofessionals (family workers or aides); and one or more secretaries. The main functions of the attendance office are the following:

a) to keep official records of the daily attendance of all students, using roll books and/or a computer-based system;

b) to monitor student attendance and identify students with attendance problems based on criteria defined by the school (e.g., five consecutive days absent, ten or more absences in a given period, etc.);

c) to identify students who are "long-term absentees" -- students who are absent from school every day in a calendar month;

d) to follow up on attendance problems by sending letters or postcards to parents, making personal or automated phone calls to parents, or visiting students' homes; and

e) to determine student enrollment status and, where appropriate, to discharge students from school.

Students leave school for a variety of reasons, ranging from moving away from the city, to having a baby or seeking full-time employment, to feeling unwanted or unsuccessful in school. Many student discharges are handled by guidance counselors or other school staff. The attendance office is generally left with the cases of students who have been absent from school a very long time, or who have turned 17 and are legally eligible to leave school. In these instances, attendance personnel try to locate the student, identify the reasons for non-attendance, and determine whether the student will or should return to school. Many times, the decision is made to discharge the student from school. When attendance personnel discharge students, they assign to the student a "discharge code" based on the circumstances surrounding the transaction. For example, a student can be discharged as Code 11 -- Removal from New York City, when attendance office personnel can verify that the student has moved away.

The following discharge codes are considered dropout discharges: Obtained Employment Certificate (Code 2); Admitted to a Business or Trade School (Code 7); Not Found (Code 12); Enrolled in Auxiliary Services for the High Schools (Code 31); Enrolled in an Outreach Center (Code 32); Enrolled in Job Corps (Code 34); Entered Military Service (Code 35); and Other 'Over 17', Discharged with Parental Consent (Code 39). Code 39 is by far the most frequent dropout discharge code used. Dropout discharge codes are sometimes called "negative codes," because they increase the school's dropout rate, a negative indicator of performance. Other reasons for school discharge, including enrollment in a college early admission program prior to high school graduation, enrollment in a New York City public evening high school, and enrollment in a full-time high school equivalency program, are not considered dropout discharges.

Attendance office functions -- monitoring daily attendance, intervening when attendance problems become serious, and processing student discharges -- can have an impact on student attendance and dropout in several ways, only some of which are directly beneficial to students. Theoretically, aggressive attendance monitoring can be a form of support service for students, alerting concerned parties when attendance falls below an acceptable level and setting in motion a process to help students improve their attendance or, possibly, find alternative educational settings that meet their needs more adequately. On the other hand, attendance office functions serve purposes that are more administrative and bureaucratic. For example, improved methods of tracking student attendance may result in calculations of attendance rates that are more favorable to the school, even though students' actual attendance has not changed. They may enable schools to identify students who are in fact not attending school at all, and may permit schools to make policy decisions about whether to retain such students on the school register or to discharge them as dropouts.

In a questionnaire survey of DPI staff conducted by Teachers College, respondents from the schools and CBOs were asked to assess the value of attendance monitoring in their programs and to describe the program components they considered most successful. Few replied that attendance monitoring had had an appreciable effect outside of family visits, and several noted that the key to program success was to have strong academic programs in which students could experience success and learn something of value. However, one teacher commented to an evaluator that "the best weapon is a good teacher with a phone close at hand," suggesting that monitoring and outreach efforts do have an impact. And one principal commented that he held his attendance office directly responsible for the school's attendance and dropout rates. In the light of these and other observations, we felt that it was important to understand whether changes in high school attendance-related services or administrative practices would have any impact. That is the rationale behind this sub-study.

Data for the sub-study were gathered through observations in attendance offices and attendance committee meetings, and through interviews with sixty-eight staff members in eleven schools (Schools 4 and 9 were not visited). Staff interviewed included the school principal, assistant principal for guidance, attendance coordinator, attendance teacher, attendance paraprofessional, DPP/AIDP coordinator, and CBO site supervisor. Not all staff positions were covered in each school; the number of persons interviewed in each category ranged from six to fourteen. In addition, this sub-study draws on statistical data on student discharges from the Office of Student Information Services (SIS) and from the Board's Annual Dropout Reports for 1984-85 through 1987-88. Most data were collected during the 1987-88 school year.

This chapter is organized around a series of questions about attendance office functions, in order to help readers locate pertinent information easily.

Did the Dropout Prevention Initiative affect the level of attention which schools gave to monitoring student attendance and managing the procedures by which students were discharged from school?

This was unquestionably the case. Having been selected for the Dropout Prevention Initiative in part because of low attendance and high dropout rates, each school knew that it had problems in these areas. Principals and staff members in all schools reported that over time their awareness of the need to take direct action to improve attendance and reduce dropout grew. Thus, one outcome of the Dropout Prevention Initiative was to help schools focus in a sustained way on the problems of attendance and dropout and not sweep these problems under the rug while concentrating on other indicators of school performance (such as graduation rates, for example).

In most schools, it was felt that this awareness ran fairly deep within the school, with more than a few (though in no case all) school staff coming to realize the importance of trying different strategies to increase student attendance and school holding power. However, there also was a more bureaucratic, superficial component to this concern. As schools realized that more was riding on their "numbers," they learned how to manipulate those numbers better.

Did the Dropout Prevention Initiative affect the way school attendance offices were staffed?

The translation of the concern about attendance and dropout rates into decisions to allocate more staff members and more staff time to attendance-related functions appeared to depend largely on the resources available to each school through the DPI, but also on schools' own sense of the importance of attendance services. In the AIDP schools, where there was almost no program money for school initiatives (95% of the funds went to the CBO), extra attendance personnel per se were not hired (though, as noted below, in these schools other staff began to do more attendance monitoring themselves). In the modified CBO schools, where the major portion of the funding went to the CBOs but some was left over for the schools, only one school reported using DPI money for an attendance staff person. An additional school did increase its attendance office staff, but not with DPI money. It was in the modified systemic schools, which had considerable program funds at the school's disposal, that we saw the most dramatic use of DPI funds for attendance office staffing. All six schools hired paraprofessionals, from two in one school to eleven in another. Although these paraprofessionals were given attendance-related duties, sometimes they were assigned to work with the guidance counselors or with the ninth grade houses instead of directly with the attendance office.

The schools also used program funds for TELSOL automatic phone calling and for attendance incentives such as contests and awards; again, there were more funds available for these purposes in the modified systemic schools.

What factors limited the work of attendance office staff?

It is important to recognize that outreach efforts were hampered from the beginning by three main factors. The first was the sheer size of the schools' attendance problem. One of the largest schools reported having as many as one thousand absences a day. Even a medium-size school (2500 students) might regularly have 500 absences a day to deal with. One attendance teacher reported having a backlog of several hundred cases of truant students to resolve, each of which required at least one home visit by him. These figures suggest that the causes for absence are complicated and very serious, and the changes that would be needed to completely reduce attendance problems go far beyond simply checking up on students, reminding students of the need to come to school more regularly, or threatening them with the consequences if they don't.

The second problem was the lack of up-to-date information on students' addresses and phone numbers to facilitate followup. For one reason or another, students often do not give accurate information to schools, or their information changes and is not updated. Two DPP schools tried unique approaches to this problem: one held a raffle for a television set and required that students list an accurate telephone number on their tickets. They were able to make about 200 corrections to their attendance files from the 1200 or so tickets sold. Another school has students fill out an "emergency information card" that lists in-school relatives (e.g., cousins) or friends who can be contacted in an emergency. This is really a way to identify good contacts who can help the school locate students.

The third problem was lack of resources. Not only were staffing levels inadequate, given the scope of the attendance problem, but other essential resources were missing. Resource problems were as basic as not having enough telephones for making calls to parents.

What students were targeted to receive attendance office services?

It is an open policy question as to what kind of students should receive attendance outreach services, just as in many ways the question of which students should receive dropout prevention services is unresolved. Should outreach services go to students with severe attendance problems, or to those who may just need a bit of help? Should they be directed to real students enrolled in a given school or to problems created by administrative practices, for example students who were assigned to the school but are in fact attending elsewhere? These were very real issues to the schools in the Dropout Prevention Initiative as they planned their outreach activities.

Several schools reported that at the beginning of the school year, extensive staff effort was devoted to resolving list-notice cases. These are students who are supposed to be enrolled in a high school but who fail to appear in September. In the vast majority of these cases, the student has enrolled elsewhere, but because there is no city-wide enrollment file (the rosters of the high schools are maintained on separate files which cannot be combined), attendance personnel must track down each non-attending student and find out whether they are enrolled in another school. This task occupies much staff time at the beginning of the year, when students actually enrolled in the school might otherwise be monitored more closely, to catch attendance problems long before they become severe.

Considerable outreach efforts were also directed toward long-term absentees (LTAs) -- those students who have been out of school one or more consecutive months. Many staff appeared to feel that such students were already beyond the point of helping, but because they hurt the school statistically (by bringing daily attendance rates down), they were targeted for outreach. As a staff member in one school noted, "The official LTA is the unofficial dropout, and we work hardest with them, although they are the hardest to find."

Most attendance teachers (the staff members hired by the Bureau of Attendance) reported that they spend all of their time on the LTA cases. In some schools, efforts with LTAs are intended to actually try to bring these students back into school. This was the case, for example, in a school which focused on the under-17-year-old LTAs -- students who were not attending school but who were not yet old enough to be discharged. In some schools, efforts were made to find alternative placements for these students, such as GED or night school programs.

In other schools, however, the effort was intended to simply resolve the cases -- find out whether these students had enrolled elsewhere, had moved, or for other reasons were not planning to return to school. Occasionally, the objective was to get a long-term absentee to return to school for just one day; then, the student officially was no longer considered an LTA and could be removed from the LTA list (schools are required to keep their LTA lists below five percent of their total registers). These intentions were most transparent in schools which conducted "LTA-blitzes" -- short-term, intensive efforts to locate and discharge LTAs, or to bring them to school for a day so that LTA lists could be reduced and the students could be counted in the active school register (on the basis of which schools receive staffing and funding allotments).

Schools did, however, also target outreach efforts to students with less severe attendance problems. The less labor-intensive services, such as automated telephone calls, went to as many students as the systems could handle in a day. For the more time-consuming services such as personal phone calls or home visits, most schools had a rule of thumb about which students to target. One school, for example, produced weekly lists of all students who were absent the entire week, and built their outreach around that. Several schools had computer printouts of students with more than five, or more than ten, consecutive absences. Sometimes paraprofessionals, or even the DPI staff, were asked to go through the roll books and identify troublesome cases or pending disasters; this method was more serendipitous.

Sometimes, outreach efforts were organized around criteria other than which students needed outreach the most. For example, in several schools, attendance personnel planned home visits on the basis of geographic location of students' homes, rather than on the basis of which students might benefit most from a home contact. While such a practice seemed rational from the outreach worker's perspective, it may not have been in the best interests of students.

One way to make outreach efforts more coherent for students was to involve other staff members in the process. In the schools with well-organized house or cluster plans, attendance monitoring was expected to be done by teachers and guidance counselors working directly with the students. At least two schools tried an "Adopt-a-Student" program, where teachers agreed to work closely with one or more students. The teachers who participated were highly enthusiastic about this program, but as with many other DPI initiatives, it did not reach deeply enough into the problem and involved only a relatively small number of students and teachers.

Many schools continued the use of incentive programs for students, including school-based contests and awards, and program-wide incentive programs such as taking students to baseball games. Program staff (especially DPP coordinators) noted that these were very time-consuming activities, but they appeared to have positive benefits for students. Even the one coordinator who reported the most problems with coordinating incentive programs also stated that they were wonderful experiences for the students, and -- eventually -- for the staff and herself as well.

What were the schools' general policies toward students who were not attending school at all?

Dropouts are often thought of as students who take deliberate action to leave school, students who come in to school and ask to be dropped from the rolls. In fact, this doesn't happen often, and school staff report that when it does, it is generally a ploy by students to get attention, anger a parent, and so on. On the contrary, the way many students become dropouts is that they simply stop coming to school and at some point the school makes a decision to discharge the student. It is therefore important to understand how schools decide what to do with students who are not attending. Specifically, how do schools decide whether to passively maintain such students on the school register, actively try to bring them back into school, give up and discharge them as dropouts, or help them find more satisfactory educational placements elsewhere?

Most schools reported that they "held onto" the non-attenders for a very long time, long after they could technically be eligible for an over-17 discharge, and tried to get these students interested in returning to school on a regular basis. One school was an exception; staff there reported that they discharged students as soon as they became old enough to be legally eligible for discharge, let them languish on the streets for a few months, and then contacted them about returning to school or to another educational setting. Staff in this school felt that students would be more motivated to return to the high school or to another educational setting after the novelty of being out of school had worn off and the realities had begun to sink in.

Attendance personnel also did report, however, that they often believed "realistically" that a student's age, low number of credits accumulated, need to work, and other factors argued against maintaining the student in school, and an alternative placement was warranted. In one school, the principal himself reported that sometimes when he had parents in for a disciplinary hearing, he would use the opportunity to suggest an alternative placement, such as a GED program, for the student. In many cases, such a determination may have genuinely been made in the best interests of the students, although it is of more than incidental interest that discharging LTAs, especially with a "non-negative" or non-dropout discharge, was also in the school's best interest.

School and CBO staff told stories about both appropriate and inappropriate discharges of students. For example, in one instance a student lived across the street from the zoned high school but really wanted to attend a GED program. A placement was found, the student woke at 4 a.m. to travel across town to the GED program, and she was very happy with the move. On the other hand, in a different school the story was told of a student who had accumulated over 15 credits but was still advised to leave school and try a GED program, while another student who had just failed four courses in one term was advised to stick it out and try summer school.

In several schools, school staff referred students to the on-site CBO program sponsored by the Dropout Prevention Initiative for information on GED or other placements prior to discharge. Sometimes the attendance personnel referred students to guidance counselors for this information, but CBOs seemed to be a more effective referral source. One school had the Board's Division of Auxiliary Services contact all their LTAs independently in order to interest them in night school or GED programs. Three schools listed the names and addresses of local GED programs on the official letters they sent notifying students that they had been discharged from school for non-attendance. Five schools experimented with inviting past and potential dropouts to a GED referral fair at the school, where students could talk with representatives from local educational programs. Some of these fairs had turnout of more than one hundred students, while others attracted fewer than five students.

At least four schools made regular efforts to contact already-discharged students, either to learn what they were doing or to recommend educational placements. This activity was sometimes carried out as part of the "discharge verification report" process which took place every year when schools were required to update and verify the status of students previously discharged by the school.

In sum, most schools reported that over the first three years of the Dropout Prevention Initiative, they increased their efforts to follow student attendance problems, to determine what was going on with long-term absentees, and to make appropriate recommendations, either to return to school or find an alternative placement, to students who were not attending school regularly.

Did the Dropout Prevention Initiative improve the coordination of services between the attendance office and other offices or programs in the school, especially with regard to students targeted for the Dropout Prevention Initiative?

Coordination of services is important when serving at-risk students, both in order to ensure that a sufficient intensity or concentration of services reaches students in need, and also to prevent overlap or duplication of services. While the Dropout Prevention Initiative did engender more activity in attendance-related services, often there was scant coordination of these services for students targeted for the program.

A first step toward coordination of services is sharing information about which students were participating in various components of the Dropout Prevention Initiative. In most schools, there was no formal mechanism by which the attendance office (or other school personnel) kept track of who the program students were. There were a few exceptions. In one school, students on the program roster were coded as such on the school's in-house computer file; however, this data file was not always checked by attendance office staff as they decided who to monitor and follow up on, and the students which the CBO was serving were not noted anywhere, so there tended to be a duplication of services for some students. In another school, the CBO placed an orange dot on the official attendance card of each of its students. In a third school, CBO participation was noted on the students' program cards but not on their official attendance cards. In a fourth school, the CBO sent forms to the teachers of its students, asking for information on the students' classroom progress; this strategy was intended to serve as the primary means for notifying teachers about who the CBO was working with, though it was unclear whether attendance staff were similarly notified. These four schools were all modified systemic schools. Two other schools in that model did nothing to identify DPP students to the attendance office -- possibly because the program considered all students to be at risk and targeted few for direct services.

In the schools in the modified CBO model, attendance offices generally were not notified of which students were enrolled in the CBO programs, but informal communication patterns may have made attendance personnel aware of who some of the CBO students were.

A second step in coordinating services is to have attendance office staff actually communicate with DPI and other school staff about individual student cases. It was generally seen as desirable for attendance personnel to gather as much pertinent information on students as possible before making a contact with the students' parents. A copy of the student's schedule, a record of recent marking period grades, a list of unfulfilled graduation requirements, information about student behavior in class (both positive and negative), some advance information from a guidance counselor or teacher about special considerations, even immunization records, were all seen as resources that could facilitate a useful interaction with the family. However, such information was often not obtained by attendance personnel before they contacted parents.

For example, in several schools the attendance office attempted to use students' official attendance cards as the repository for information that would be helpful in attendance-related services. One school wanted guidance counselors and other support staff to stamp their names on the back of the attendance cards of students they were working with, so attendance personnel would know who to contact if a problem came up (this idea had the principal's active support). Other schools wanted counselors to review the attendance cards and make notes on the back of them as they worked with students. But attendance personnel reported that counselors rarely did these things. As an example, one attendance teacher reported having spent a good deal of time tracking down a truant student, only to find out that a guidance counselor had arranged a transfer to a school in Maryland without notifying the attendance office.

Attendance staff often made attempts to track down information from student files, but reported that it was not always possible to do so, given the large numbers of students they had to deal with. This was true even in one school with an extensive in-house computer record system. In at least two other schools, however, procedures were developed so that attendance personnel could easily obtain a computer-based data sheet on students before they made a home contact; this was reported to be extremely helpful.

Several schools noted that suspension information was not reported to the attendance office, so that family workers sometimes made outreach visits to absent students who were in fact under suspension.

A third step in coordinating services is for attendance office personnel to be familiar with the different kinds of activities and services available to students in the school, so that suggestions and referrals can be made when talking with the student or family. Interviews with attendance outreach personnel indicated that these staff often did not know what school services and programs to recommend to students. In one school, the attendance teacher had only a vague notion of what the CBO program was or which students might benefit from it. In another school, only one family assistant had a breadth of understanding about school resources, and that was only because she was very aggressive in asking school staff about various programs or services. This was an especially large problem in earlier years of the program, when attendance teachers were based at the Bureau of Attendance and assigned to different schools; they did not have a strong identification with the schools and often knew very little about a particular school. By the program's third year, attendance teachers were on the school payrolls and appeared to be more integrated into their assigned schools. Still, overall, the personnel who represented the school in contacts with families were often not able to give parents or students specific information about options available at the school.

A final step in coordinating services is for school and program staff to keep track of student attendance and find out what kinds of outreach are being done by the attendance office. Again, there was variability in how this was carried out in the program high schools. For instance, few program coordinators regularly kept track of the attendance of their students, either for summary or statistical purposes or in order to ensure that services were delivered to students who needed them. On occasion, someone in the DPI office would take note of a program student who needed follow-up and would make a referral to attendance personnel. (In one school, the program coordinator would note which students in the entire school needed followup.) But there was usually no staff available in the DPI office for direct outreach or to learn what the attendance office had done after the referral.

The community-based organizations, on the other hand, generally did keep track of the attendance of their students, and when time and personnel were available, outreach efforts were made. Again, however, the CBOs were largely unaware of which students the attendance office was working with. One CBO reported that they could not even obtain a copy of the daily absence list. Most CBOs reported that they did not have adequate staff to make regular outreach efforts, much less to stay abreast of the school's own efforts.

Policies for dealing with long-term absentees were discussed in the previous section. Another aspect of this issue concerns the coordination of services for LTAs between the attendance office and other staff in the school, particularly regarding whether DPI staff or other school personnel were informed when students were being considered for discharge. School practices varied in this area. Several schools did circulate lists of students who had become long-term absentees (such students were transferred out of their assigned classes into a special holding class until they established a pattern of regular attendance again). This practice was a fairly passive way of letting teachers or support staff know of students who might become dropouts. One school was more aggressive. In that school, the attendance office circulated every month a list of "potential LTAs," and solicited information from staff on the students' whereabouts. Teachers and others would send notes back to the attendance office if they had seen a student at some point during the previous month, or if they had any information about why the student was not attending school.

Most program personnel reported that they typically learned that a program student had been discharged from school after the fact, and were only sometimes consulted before the discharge took place. In one sense this is hardly surprising, since the attendance office staff often didn't know who the program students were in the first place. Furthermore, program staff often felt that the discharges were appropriate, especially in cases where they themselves had lost track of the students. But there were instances when program staff were surprised to know that the attendance office had in effect given up on students and had discharged them from school.

In only one school did the principal report that he became directly involved in coordinating attendance services; this particular principal stated that he made periodic requests that a particular student be given some outreach. Other principals, however, did seem to be aware of at least a few student cases by name.

A final problem with coordination involved the deans. Two schools reported that deans would tell students they were being kicked out of school, which effectively convinced students not to return to school, when in fact the deans had no authority at all to discharge students. Other schools reported that the attendance office was not notified of student suspensions. Thus, students might be urged to return to school by attendance outreach staff, at the same time that they were barred from school by the deans.

Did the Dropout Prevention Initiative have any impact on bookkeeping practices for attendance and student discharge?

Finally, we consider whether changes in attendance office functioning resulted in changes in bookkeeping practices or the way records about attendance and discharge were kept and statistics were generated. Certainly, administrative practices surrounding the generation of attendance and discharge statistics are crucial: inaccurate reporting practices can artificially inflate or deflate a school's statistics. And most school staff are well aware of the importance of their school's statistics.

The ten DPP schools had adopted an automated building entry/security system during the first year of the program; this system also served as a way to record students' daily attendance, by coding students present as they entered the building and inserted a card in the machine. The other way in which attendance was recorded was the old-fashioned way, through roll taken during "official class." These two methods of taking attendance produced discrepant results: some students who entered the building and thus were coded present through the first system then cut official class, and were coded absent through the rollbook system. After a year or two, most schools had decided which attendance system produced the most accurate results; often, it was by combining the two systems to catch all students who had either entered the building or attended official class. Thus, one byproduct of the Dropout Prevention Initiative was greater capacity to mark as many students as possible present in school.

In addition, by 1987-88, most schools had implemented a "reverse attendance" procedure, by which a student who was marked absent in official class could have that absence reversed to a "present" if he or she were present in at least three subject classes. Class cut sheets were compared with daily absence lists to locate students whose attendance could be reversed. Some school staff reported that this had a dramatic impact on school attendance rates. (This practice was eventually adopted in all city high schools.)

In terms of recording student discharges, over the course of the Dropout Prevention Initiative, most schools appeared to become much better informed about the different codes which could be used to process student discharges. They learned which codes were considered dropouts and thus counted against the school; they learned the documentation requirements for using certain codes (for example, enrollment in a GED program had to be verified before Code 36 could be used). It is safe to say that attendance personnel regularly made strategic decisions about how to process student discharges in order to reflect positively on the school, without deliberately falsifying documents.

For example, most schools were aware of being caught in the "catch-22" of not being able to send students to GED programs until they were officially discharged as dropouts from school, but of course what they wanted on their records was the positive code for GED admission, not a negative code for dropout. (Theoretically, the negative dropout discharge code could not be converted to a GED-admission until the student's admission was confirmed, and GED programs would not confirm admission until they had received notification of high school discharge.) Most schools resolved this dilemma fairly simply, but telling GED programs that the students had been discharged as dropouts but not actually processing the discharge through the Board of Education record system; then, after GED admission was confirmed, they would process the student as discharged to the GED program, not as a dropout.

As another example, students over 21 years of age could be officially discharged as a non-negative discharge, since the state limit on compulsory education ends at 21. Several staff reported that one way to artificially lower the dropout rate was by maintaining non-attending students on roster until they were over 21. Although this practice was not followed very often, particularly since maintaining older, non-attending students on register had the negative effect of bringing daily attendance rates down, it serves as an example of how schools might manipulate procedures to keep their dropout rates as low as possible.

We cannot ascertain how often students were given discharge codes that were patently false, such as having moved out of the city when in fact no verification of such a move existed (the Board itself occasionally audits discharge records for evidence of practices like this). It is evident, however, that attendance personnel could manipulate dropout statistics in other ways, especially by delaying the discharge of long-term absentee students who were already *de facto* dropouts, or, conversely, by seeking to resolve LTA cases shortly after students turned seventeen and became eligible for discharge.

Many attendance office staff echoed the words of one attendance coordinator who told an evaluator, "If the school wants a 9.9% dropout rate, I give them 9.9%." In other words, while honest efforts were surely being made to prevent students from dropping out, in the end a school's dropout rate also depended heavily on the administrative practices in the attendance office.

What is the relation between these features of attendance office functioning and discharge dropout rates for the schools overall and for the Dropout Prevention Initiative?

Certainly many factors work together to create a dropout rate in a high school, notably the number of high risk students enrolled in the school, the quality of instructional and support services for students, and other features of school organization which either encourage students to remain in school or push them out. Attendance-related services are only one of those relevant factors. Therefore, we cannot say with certainty that changes in attendance office functions directly resulted in higher or lower dropout rates in a given school. However, we can show some tentative associations between the two. In Table 2-1, we briefly summarize several aspects of attendance office services which have been discussed above, and also display school and program dropout rates over a four year period, 1984-85 (the year before DPI was fully implemented) through 1987-88.

It is important to understand that program dropout rates cannot easily be compared between schools without considering other information about the characteristics of the program students in each school. For example, one school may have deliberately enrolled long-term absentees -- students at very high risk of dropping out -- in the Dropout Prevention Initiative, while another school may have targeted incoming ninth graders -- students at lower risk for dropout -- for program services. Comparing dropout rates in these two schools would be unfair without taking into account these student background characteristics. Moreover, since schools appear to have enrolled different types of students in the Dropout Prevention Initiative during each of the three years of the Initiative, it is also

TABLE 2-1

School and Program Dropout Rates Contrasted
Characteristics of Attendance Office Funct[illegible]

School	School and Program Dropout Rates* 1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	Trend in Program Rates	Changes in Attendance Office Staffing	Coordination between DPI, school, and att. office	General policies for discharging LTA students over age 17	Follow-up and Referrals to Alt. Settings for Discharged Students
Schools showing a drop in school dropout rates									
1	19.7%	17.8%	16.8%	8.2%		Increase	Low		
	DPI:	16.7%	5.2%	10.9%	Drop‡				
4	9.0%	12.4%	6.6%	5.1%		#			
	DPI:	18.7%	13.0%	17.8%	Stable				
5	13.5%	11.4%	10.1%	10.3%		Increase	Low	Discharged frequently	Placement attempts made
	DPI:	14.2%	7.9%	21.7%	Rise‡				
6	26.1%	11.3%	11.8%	12.8%		Some increase	Moderate	Automatic disch. reduced	CBO helps find placements
	DPI:	14.4%	6.4%	15.5%	Stable‡				
7	13.4%	9.6%	9.4%	2.4%		Increase	Moderate		
	DPI:	19.4%	3.4%	13.4%	Drop‡				
8	18.0%	10.9%	10.7%	12.4%		Some increase	Low/moderate	Quick discharge	Tried outreach/GED fairs & referrals
	DPI:	20.3%	6.1%	12.6%	Drop‡				
10	13.6%	10.5%	7.8%	6.8%		Increase	Low	Will not automatically disch.	School & CBO try to find placements
	DPI:	24.3%	9.9%	11.7%	Drop				
Schools with fairly stable school dropout rates									
3	11.0%	8.8%	7.2%	9.9%		Some increase	Moderate/high	Will discharge	School & CBO attempt referrals
	DPI:	17.1%	9.0%	21.5%	Fluctuate				
11	10.7%	12.8%	11.6%	11.8%		No change	Low		CBO tries to find alternate placements
	DPI:	18.2%	15.6%	11.1%	Drop				
Schools with fluctuating school dropout rates									
2	8.4%	4.4%	13.9%	6.3%		No change	Low/moderate	Held off on discharging	
	DPI:	10.6%	16.4%	5.8%	Fluctuate				
9	14.6%	5.2%	8.4%	11.1%		#			
	DPI:	11.0%	8.8%	15.9%	Fluctuate				
13	18.2%	8.6%	16.2%	8.3%		Some increase	Moderate	Keep students as long as possible; disch. the "Not Found's"	Tries placements; held GED fair
	DPI:	6.3%	12.9%	18.8%	Rise				
Schools with rising school dropout rates									
12	6.3%	7.9%	8.1%	12.5%		#		Shifted emphasis from retaining to discharging	Tried outreach fair
	DPI:	3.6%	1.3%	20.9%	Rise				

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* Overall school dropout rates are shown on the first line; DPI program dropout rates are shown on the second line. School dropout rates were obtained from the Board of Education's Annual Dropout Report for 1987-88. Program dropout rates were based on updated data provided by the Board for this report; the numbers may differ from those reported in earlier evaluation reports.

‡ These schools cleared their Year 2 DPI rosters of students who had become LTAs or were discharged after the fall term; therefore, their program dropout rates for 1986-87 are artifically low.

Not enough information was obtained from the school to characterize the school accurately.

somewhat risky to compare program dropout rates within each school across the three year period.

With these caveats in mind, we can make some observations about attendance office functioning and school and program dropout rates.

Of the thirteen high schools in the Dropout Prevention Initiative, seven had a general decline in the overall school dropout rate between 1984-85 and 1987-88. Two schools had fairly stable dropout rates during this period, three schools had irregular fluctuations in their school dropout rates, and one school had a rise in dropout rates.

There was only moderate correspondence between a school's overall dropout rates and its program dropout rates during the four year period. Of the seven schools with declining school dropout rates, only four showed declining program dropout rates. One of the schools with a stable overall dropout rate saw a decline in the program dropout rate, and one of the schools with a fluctuating rate overall had a clear rise in the program dropout rate. We suspect that this lack of consistency is due to the fact that program dropout rates are highly sensitive to the type of student enrolled in the Dropout Prevention Initiative, as well as to changes in programs or services for students. Since overall school populations rarely change dramatically from one year to the next, school dropout rates are primarily sensitive to changes in school programs or services. With two different sets of factors operating, it is not surprising to see slightly different trends in school and program dropout rates.

Nearly all of the schools which had a declining school dropout rate also increased the staffing of their attendance offices, either with DPI funds or general school funds. Four of these schools also made fairly active attempts to refer students to alternative educational settings, or to verify that students had found such settings on their own, which often resulted in the discharge being coded as a non-dropout discharge. It therefore appears that one of the results of having additional attendance personnel is not that students will necessarily remain in the high school, but that they will leave high school for another educational setting and not be considered a school dropout.

There was no such association between attendance office staffing and program dropout rates. Again, this is probably due to the fact that attendance services were not directed exclusively to program students, and to the fact that program dropout rates were highly dependent on the type of student enrolled in the program and not just to how those students were served by the school.

In no school was there a consistently high level of coordination between the attendance office and other school staff regarding the follow-up of students with attendance problems or students likely to be discharged from school. This was true for

DPI program students as well as for the general student populations. Therefore, declining dropout rates cannot be attributed to better coordination of services, although this did appear to be a factor in some individual student cases.

There was a slight tendency for some schools with declining dropout rates to also use information more effectively in their attendance-related functions (not shown in the table). Information on student absences or cutting was obtained from and shared with more school personnel, and a more diverse and complete set of information on students was available to staff working on attendance functions. Thus, although coordination among school offices was not achieved to the degree that it might be able to have an impact on attendance and dropout, the organized use of information seems to have enabled attendance staff to perform their own jobs more effectively, despite working in relative isolation from other school or CBO personnel.

Finally, several schools reported having made changes in their general policies toward the discharge of students who are technically eligible for discharge (by virtue of having turned 17 and not attending school). There is some evidence that such policy shifts were related to changes in school dropout rates. Schools which elected to hold students on register even after they could have been discharged were able to reduce their dropout rates, in some cases by fairly dramatic amounts, at least over the short-term. Fluctuations in school dropout rates could also be attributed to such policy changes, because the students who have been kept on register during one academic year often need to be cleared off the school rolls a year or two later. Thus, a reduction in dropouts one year can lead to a rise in dropouts in later years.

These observations lend support to our initial conjecture that school attendance-related services can affect student persistence in school in two ways -- by actually helping students to stay in school, and by enabling schools to manipulate the timing and outcomes of discharge processes in ways that produce more positive indicators of performance, such as dropout statistics.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Many changes were made in attendance office functioning during the first three years of the Dropout Prevention Initiative. Some of them were simply bookkeeping changes, while others were designed to improve the services given to students with attendance problems or students who were no longer coming to school at all. The delivery of attendance services was limited by the magnitude of the problem relative to available resources, by policies that sometimes resulted in effort being expended to clear the books of unresolved cases rather than helping students, and by the lack of coordination between attendance staff and other school and CBO personnel.

We believe that it is fundamentally important for attendance services to be integrated with other school services -- students should receive attendance-related outreach as part of a comprehensive program of assistance, and not just attendance personnel but also teachers and support staff should be involved in following up on student attendance problems. We return to the comment made by one of the program staff: the best way to handle attendance problems is with a teacher who has a telephone at hand (and, we might add, time to use it).

Our specific recommendations are the following:

(a) Schools should consider the personnel who do attendance outreach to be their chief representatives to students' families, not just an initial point of contact who can refer parents or guardians to other school staff. These first contacts are extremely important in setting the tone for school-family communication. Schools should develop strategies for involving teachers and guidance counselors more seriously in attendance outreach, providing them with appropriate time and resources for doing so.

(b) All staff, whether paraprofessionals or otherwise, who interact with students and their families regarding school attendance should receive high-quality, ongoing training and support. These staff members often confront an array of social, economic, and school-related problems when they meet with parents and they need interpersonal skills and information to be able to offer many kinds of help to families. They also should have opportunities to conduct outreach at times other than when students are having problems in school.

(c) The Board of Education should move swiftly to create a system-wide high school enrollment file so that schools can receive accurate lists of enrollees in September, and so they can check computer files for students who are on the enrollment list but don't appear in school, instead of trying to contact students directly. Attendance outreach in September should be devoted to early intervention with students, rather than to sorting out the students who are actually enrolled in the school from those enrolled elsewhere.

(d) Schools should develop methods for clearing up the majority of student program/schedule changes before the first week of school, so that teachers can have accurate class lists when school begins and attendance monitoring can begin right away.

(e) All schools should adopt some method to indicate on each student's attendance card (or computer database record) the guidance counselors, CBO staff, and other special program staff who are working with that student. It should be very easy for attendance personnel to know who else to consult with regarding student attendance problems.

(f) Schools should continue to explore ways to create small teams of teachers and other staff who work directly with a group of students and who can coordinate instructional and support services for them. The house plans are a step in this direction. Attendance monitoring should be seen as part of a constellation of services provided by a core team, not as a separate service offered by an isolated office in the school.

(g) All staff who work on attendance-related services should have access to quick, easily-obtainable summaries or profiles on students, so they can have relevant information at hand as they review attendance and academic progress patterns with students and/or families. In-house computer databases of student information, especially systems which allow schools to capture items of information that they themselves feel are important in understanding student progress, are a promising resource.

(h) Teachers and other staff who get involved with attendance monitoring should have the supplies and equipment to do the job easily. Accurate phone number lists and many more telephones in every school building are a requirement. Some schools have developed unusual methods for keeping phone lists accurate; these should be emulated.

(i) Postcards and letters sent third-class by the UAPC computer system to the parents of students who have been absent or cut class are largely ineffective. They arrive too long after the fact, are sometimes in error, and are easily ignored or refuted by students and families. The Board should consider discontinuing this practice.

(j) When students either cannot quickly see the negative consequences of being absent from school, or the positive consequences of attending school, they are more likely to have erratic attendance. Schools need to provide more timely feedback to students about how their attendance is affecting their performance in the current grading period and their progress toward graduation. This should be done in a constructive manner, giving students a variety of options to address the many reasons why they may be missing school.

(k) Schools need to think creatively about how to help students catch up quickly after either long-term or short-term absences. Often the critical, non-welcoming reception they get upon their return, coupled with the problems of having missed work, make it easier for students to keep being absent than to return to school.

(l) The process by which students are discharged from school needs to be coordinated among various service providers. There should be an explicit consensus among all staff who know a student before that student is discharged, and coordinated efforts should be made to help arrange alternative placements or other follow-up for the student.

(m) The majority of students are discharged from school as Code 39 -- Over 17. This code gives schools very little information about the reasons for students' non-attendance and withdrawal from school; thus, schools cannot easily learn from the experience of past cohorts of students. In order to help schools gain more understanding of why students are dropping out, the Board or individual schools should consider revising the discharge process and collecting more information on the reasons for dropout. This information should be coded and stored (for example, in a computerized database) in ways that enable it to be used by individual schools and not just the central Board.

Chapter Three

HISPANIC STUDENTS IN THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAM

Joseph C. Grannis with Maria E. Torres-Guzman[1]

Summary

The names of all students on the evaluation rosters for the New York City Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) in the 29 middle schools and the 10 high schools of the DPP were coded for Spanish surname in both 1986-87 and 1987-88. Inter-coder agreement on names was .97 for samples of both the middle school and the high school students. In 1986-87, the second year of the DPP, a survey was administered to DPP students in the middle schools and the high schools and students self-identified their ethnic or racial status on the survey. Various data collected for all students on the rosters and through the survey have been analyzed to profile the Hispanic students in the DPP and, where relevant, to compare profiles for Hispanic (or Latino) and non-Hispanic students.

Middle School Findings

Nearly half of the students who were enrolled in the DPP in the middle schools, in both 1986-87 and 1987-88, had Spanish surnames. Forty-five percent of the respondents to the Teachers College (TC) survey of DPP middle school students in 1986-87 identified themselves as "Hispanic or Spanish." Surname coding and students' self-identification as Hispanic agreed in 85% of cases.

In both years examined, the Hispanic students in the DPP were somewhat older for grade than the non-Hispanic students, but were similarly distributed in the grades. The greatest proportion were in the eighth grade. For the Hispanic students, there was a higher proportion of males (53%) than of females (47%) in the middle school DPP; this was also true for the non-Hispanic students.

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[1] The authors are indebted to a number of individuals for their advice and assistance, particularly Selina Bendock, Luisa Contreras, Carol Gayle, Carlos Gil, Herminio Martinez, Yvonne Martinez, Luis Reyes, and Lucia Rodriguez. Aaron Pallas designed the 1986-87 survey instrument and the entire DPI evaluation staff administered it.

The majority of Hispanic children came from non-traditional homes headed by a female.

In 1987-88 (the only year for which adequate LEP data were available), 13% of the DPP Hispanic middle-school students were classified as LEP, 11% had marginal English proficiency (MEP, scoring between 21 and 39 on a LAB test or having taken another standardized test in a language other than English), and 76% were classified as English proficient (EP). By contrast, 3% of the non-Hispanic students were LEP, 12% were MEP, and 85% were EP.

The largest proportion of the students who self-identified as Hispanics preferred to speak English, but a majority reported that Spanish was the language spoken most often at home.

Attendance outreach and individual guidance or student conference were recorded at substantial levels for Hispanic students, while levels of service in group counseling, parent counseling, linkage between middle school and high school, and health were considerably lower than the program promised. The levels of service to non-Hispanic students were similar.

In every area of service recorded, English proficiency made a difference to Hispanic students, with English proficient Hispanic students receiving higher levels of services than marginally English proficient or LEP Hispanic students. Among the non-Hispanic students, MEP students received lower levels of service than either EP or LEP students.

In both 1986-87 and 1987-88, attendance rates were very similar for Hispanic and non-Hispanic middle-school students in the DPP. Hispanic students passed courses at somewhat higher rates than non-Hispanic students.

For both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students, the strongest gains in courses passed in 1987-88 were made by LEP students. Again among both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students, EP students gained less and MEP students gained least in courses passed. The findings imply that bilingual or ESL (English as a Second Language) classes that the LEP students qualified for were favorable for their passing courses. However, the evalution did not have information about which courses the students took. Marginally English proficient students appear to have been particularly at risk.

Except for the language variable, Spanish surname status made little difference in the objective data. To some extent this reflects the standardization of the student population that results from using the eligibility criteria to admit students to the program. It might also indicate equal treatment, or lack of treatment as the case may be, of Hispanic and non-Hispanic middle-school students in the program.

The responses of students to a survey administered in the schools in 1986-87 in some ways confirm and in some ways complicate these conclusions. The respondents had considerably higher attendance and course pass rates than non-respondents, but their responses still, or perhaps all the more, suggest dimensions that might be important to their further education.

The Hispanic students reported relatively positive perceptions of the school environment, compared to non-Hispanic respondents. They had somewhat lower educational expectations--or more realistic expectations, it might be said--than the non-Hispanic students, and less of an idea of what career they might have. The Hispanic students reported lower levels of educational attainment for their parents, compared to non-Hispanic students. They also reported somewhat less frequent career education experiences at school, and fewer high-school linkage activities.

The area of educational and occupational expectations emerges as the one that is most likely to be associated with Hispanic students' subsequent rates of completing school, especially since the Hispanic students in the DPP were at least as successful in their courses as the non-Hispanic students, overall. Career education and educational planning need to be greatly strengthened for all middle-school students in the DPP, and might be particularly important for Hispanic students.

High School Findings

About 45% of the students who were enrolled in the DPP in the high schools had Spanish surnames. Forty-three percent (43%) of the respondents to the Teachers College survey of DPP high school students in 1986-87 identified themselves as "Hispanic or Spanish." The survey revealed that there were about equal proportions of Hispanic and Afro-American students in the high school DPP, with much smaller proportions of Asian-Americans, whites, or others.

Again, the majority of the Hispanic students came from non-traditional family configurations, as did the majority of the non-Hispanic students.

A fourth (25%) of the Hispanic surname DPP high school students in 1987-88 were classified as LEP and another 10% were judged to have marginal English proficiency (MEP). Much smaller proportions of the non-Hispanic students were LEP or MEP.

In both years examined, almost half of the targeted Hispanic students were in the ninth grade and over half were two or more years overage for grade. Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in the DPP were similarly distributed by grade and by age for grade.

About equal or slightly larger proportions of Hispanic than of non-Hispanic students targeted for services in the high school participated in five out of six basic types of program activities in 1987-88. While Hispanic LEP students participated less, or received lower levels of service, than Hispanic MEP or EP students, this is confounded by the fact that LEP students had higher levels of attendance and courses passed than non-LEP students. Hispanic and non-Hispanic students alike had lower levels of total activities than the DPP rationale called for.

In both 1986-87 and 1987-88, Hispanic students in the DPP, especially males, lost slightly more attendance (comparing days attended in the program year with days attended *by the same students* in the prior year) than non-Hispanic students. Attendance was higher for students that were in a higher grade, closer to age for grade, and LEP. Participation in most DPP activities was associated with lower losses in attendance.

The academic success of the Hispanic and the non-Hispanic targeted students was very similar. The average student in both groups was accumulating credits at a much lower rate than would be necessary to graduate in a reasonable period of time. Hispanic and non-Hispanic students alike passed more courses if they were female, in a higher grade, closer to age for grade, and LEP. MEP Hispanic students passed courses at lower rates than either LEP or EP Hispanic students. Most of the DPP activities did not contribute to Hispanic students' improvement in courses passed. Hispanic students particularly appeared to need academic support if they were participating in a part-time jobs program, which another evaluation substudy has concluded was important to the students both for work experience and for income.

A survey was administered to 30% of the DPP targeted high school students in 1986-87. The respondents were attending school and passing courses at much higher rates than the average targeted student overall. The prior-year rates for attendance and courses passed for the Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in the survey sample were almost identical. Equal proportions of students identified themselves as Hispanic (43%) and Black or Afro-American (43%).

While the intergenerational language shift from Spanish to English is visible among the high school students in similar ways as with the middle school students, the degree of the shift in language preferences and practices appears to decrease somewhat. Fewer students preferred to speak English with their peers and with their parents, and more spoke Spanish at home.

For the majority of the survey items, the responses of Hispanic and non-Hispanic students were fairly similar. However, Hispanic respondents, especially males, had somewhat lower expectations of future schooling than did non-Hispanic respondents. The Hispanic students, especially the females, tended to see fewer connections between their current or future education and a career. Hispanic students indicated a lower sense of control over school matters than did non-Hispanic students. At the same time, Hispanic students perceived relationships with teachers and with student peers more positively than did non-Hispanic students.

Since both the Hispanic and the non-Hispanic students were in the DPP because they had been identified by school staff as being at-risk on some basis, the students are distinguishable more from their survey responses than in other characteristics. Putting all of the data together, it is hypothesized that Hispanic students are more likely to drop out, or complete less school, because they see less of a path to a career through education, while non-Hispanic students are more likely to drop out, especially Afro-Americans, because they find the school environment more negative. When combined with the Hispanic students perceiving less control over school matters than non-Hispanic students, this might also predict a higher dropout rate for the Hispanics. The reason is that the students who are more invested in education as a route to the future, and who believe they have more control, might persist more, despite their perception of the school environment as negative; and conversely, the students who connect school less to their future jobs and roles, although they experience school relationships more positively, would have less reason to stay in school.

The survey findings are qualified by the fact that the respondents had relatively high attendance and rates of passing courses. Both Hispanic and non-Hispanic lower-achieving students are likely to experience the school environment more negatively.

As was concluded from the middle school survey, career education and educational planning might be particularly crucial for Hispanic students, at the same time that they are vital for all. Students' gaining a sense of control over their educational and career decisions would be important aims. Improving the quality of human relationships in the school would likewise benefit all students, at the same time that this might be particularly crucial for Afro-American students. Finally, the relative success of LEP students may not argue just for extending bilingual education or ESL to marginally English proficient students, as indeed the new state guidelines now allow, but for making culturally appropriate adaptations of the curriculum to all groups of students. In arriving at these conclusions, we risk their being taken out of context. However, we have acted on a sense of obligation to use all of the data we have collected in the evaluation to shed the most light possible on the situation of the students in their schools and the ways that the schools might be made more viable for all students.

HISPANIC STUDENTS IN THE DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAM

Introduction

Hispanic students have been reported to drop out of schools at higher rates than Black or white students nationally and in New York City. The Board of Education's Annual Dropout Report 1987-88 estimated that Hispanic students would drop out at a rate of 31.8%, compared to 24.5% for Blacks and 19.2% for whites. Estimates based on other methods of calculation have been considerably higher but have also shown the highest rates for Hispanic students. These figures have led the Teachers College evaluation to ask whether its data would shed any light on the processes involved in Hispanic students' dropping out. At the least, even where findings were similar for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students, profiling data for Hispanic students could help educators in planning programs and formulating questions for further research.

Hispanics (or Latinos) constitute the second largest ethnic group, after Blacks or African-Americans, in the New York City schools. They are expected to become the largest ethnic group in the schools within the present decade. Both in 1986-87 and in 1987-88, 34% of students in the middle schools and 29% of students in the high schools were classified by the Board of Education as Hispanics.

"Hispanic" is an umbrella term that is used to refer to populations from a variety of national origins: Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Columbia, Cuba, Mexico, and other Carribean, Central and South America countries, and persons of Spanish-speaking background from the Southwest of the United States. Different patterns of migration history, family composition, English language proficiency, education, employment, and income characterize Hispanics of different national origins. An analysis of data that does not take national origin into account will be extremely limited. When Teachers College first considered doing a special study of the Hispanic students in the DPI, we anticipated interviewing a sample of students of different national origins. Our resources did not permit this. The findings in this report are based on the more general distinction between Hispanics and non-Hispanics. Hopefully, these findings will lay a foundation for further research and intervention in the New York City schools. Support for this disaggregation can be found in recent studies such as Bean and Tienda (1987) and Fernandez and Shu (1988).[2]

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[2] Bean, Frank D. and Tienda, Marta (1987), *The Hispanic Population of the United States*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Fernandez, Ricardo R. and Shu, Gangjian (1988),

Basis of identification

Data on student characteristics, services received, attendance, and courses passed, were made available by the Board of Education for students in the Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) in 1986-87 and 1987-88 in the 10 high schools and the 29 feeder middle schools of the DPP. While the Board obviously has its own data on students' race or ethnic group, Teachers College used Spanish-surname identification and students' self-identification in a survey.[3]

1986-87. The names of all 3922 students on the Board of Education rosters for the 1986-87 DPP in 29 middle schools were printed out. Two Hispanic graduate students coded the roster names as Spanish or not-Spanish. They agreed on 97% of the cases in a sample of 270 names coded by both. Of the 3922 students on the 1986-87 DPP middle school roster, 1897 or 48% were identified as having Hispanic surnames.

A survey was administered by Teachers College to 1718 (44%) of the targeted DPP middle school students in Spring 1987 and 45% of the respondents identified themselves as "Hispanic or Spanish," compared to 32% who responded Black or Afro-American, 8% Asian-American or Pacific Islanders, 4% White, and 9% Other. When the OSIS numbers on the surveys and the program rosters were matched, the identification by surname and students' self identification agreed in 85% of the middle school cases for which both program roster and survey data were available. A procedure was used to substitute the students' self-identification for the surname identification in those cases where there was disagreement. The reliability of the resulting identification

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School Dropouts: New Approaches to an Enduring Problem, *Education and Urban Society, 20*(4), 363-386.

[3] The Spanish-surname coding has its limitations. It does not include students who are of Hispanic origin but have other than the identifiable names. For example, it would not identify a third generation Chicana with the surname Clarke nor would it identify an individual whose last name is O'Reilly but who was born and raised in Puerto Rico and whose mother is Puerto Rican. Many students are missed and undercounts occur in this way. On the other hand, the count includes Philipinos and other populations with Spanish surname who are not Hispanic. The high interrater reliability for the coders identifying the Spanish surnames and the cross check with students' self-identification were ways TC partially compensated for these limitations.

was estimated to be 89% for the total 1986-87 middle-school program roster.

An Hispanic graduate student coded the names of 1483 students from the 1986-87 evaluation sample rosters (the evaluation sample being a random selection from the larger program population of 3418 students) in the 10 high schools that made up the DPP and for which the DPP middle schools were feeder schools. Of these students, 668 or 45% had Spanish surnames.

A slightly different version of the survey was administered in 1986-87 to targeted students in the 10 DPP high schools. Out of 431 respondents, 43% identified themselves as Hispanic or Spanish, 43% as Black or Afro-American, 4% as Asian-American or Pacific Islander, 2% as white, and 8% as other. Because the data files were not merged at the time, the survey results were not used to correct the identification of high school students by surname. Findings are reported in the section below on Hispanic high school students.

1987-88. An Hispanic graduate student coded all of the names on the DPP middle school roster. The total Board of Education roster of students targeted for DPI services in the 29 middle schools in 1987-88 was used. Out of 4752 middle school students in the DPP in 1987-88, 2395, or 50%, were identified as Hispanic.

For the 10 DPP high schools in 1987-88, the evaluation sample was 1436 students selected randomly from the full program population of 3463 students on the program rosters. Two Hispanic staff coded the names of all 1436 students in this sample. Agreement on a sample of 300 names was 97% for the two coders. Of the total sample of 1436 students, 44% were identified as Hispanic.

Purposes of the analysis.

Our central purpose is to differentiate among the Hispanic students, i. e., to profile different levels of Hispanic student characteristics, outcomes, and, for smaller samples, the students' responses to selected items from the 1986-87 student survey. Minority educators have strongly encouraged Teachers College to carry out this analysis of the data for Hispanic students in the DPI, in line with a more general movement toward disaggregating data that might shed light on the conditions surrounding minority students' persisting in school or dropping out. Comparisons between Hispanic and non-Hispanic students are limited since the surname identification does not differentiate among non-Hispanics, nor does it recognize Hispanic national origin groups. Afro-Americans clearly made up the majority of non-Hispanic students in the DPP. The non-Hispanic population nonetheless included other ethnic or racial groups. Our intention is to avoid misleading comparisons, but still to disclose comparative data where this might help to pinpoint information about the Hispanic students themselves. We will not report statistics where we think they would be misleading or unnecessary.

It must be emphasized that the samples used in this study are not representative of all students in the New York City schools, but only of students selected for the Dropout Prevention Program. Given the fact that most students had to meet one or another of the criteria of eligibility for services in the program, the samples concentrate on students more at risk, or for whom, almost by definition, school is not working. This not only makes the samples unrepresentative of the larger populations of Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in the schools, it also tends to homogenize the Hispanic and non-Hispanic students who are in the samples.

Middle School Hispanic Students

Demographic characteristics

Hispanic status. Of 3922 students who were targeted for services in middle schools in the Dropout Prevention Program in 1986-87, 48% were classified as Hispanic. Out of 4752 students in the DPP in 1987-88, 50% were identified as Hispanic.

Language proficiency. We have classified all of the DPI students into three different levels of English language proficiency: Limited English Proficiency (LEP), for students scoring 20 or below on a LAB test; Marginal English Proficiency (MEP), for students scoring between 21 and 39 on a LAB test, or students for whom there was an indication of their being given some other standardized test in a language other than English; and English Proficient (EP), for students meeting neither of the aforesaid criteria. These classifications only approximate the language differences that students actually experience, but they allow some exploration of the consequences of language differences. The term "marginal" may overestimate the students' English proficiency, as various findings below suggest further.

Language information was not available for a sufficient number of students in 1986-87 to allow a meaningful analysis. In 1987-88, 13% of the 2395 Hispanic targeted middle school students were classified as LEP, 11% had marginal English proficiency, and 76% were classified as English proficient. By contrast, 3% of the 2357 non-Hispanic students were LEP, 12% were MEP, and 85% were EP. Aggregating LEP and MEP, 24% of the Hispanic students were found to have limited or marginal English proficiency, compared to 15% of non-Hispanic students. (Figures 3-1 and 3-2).

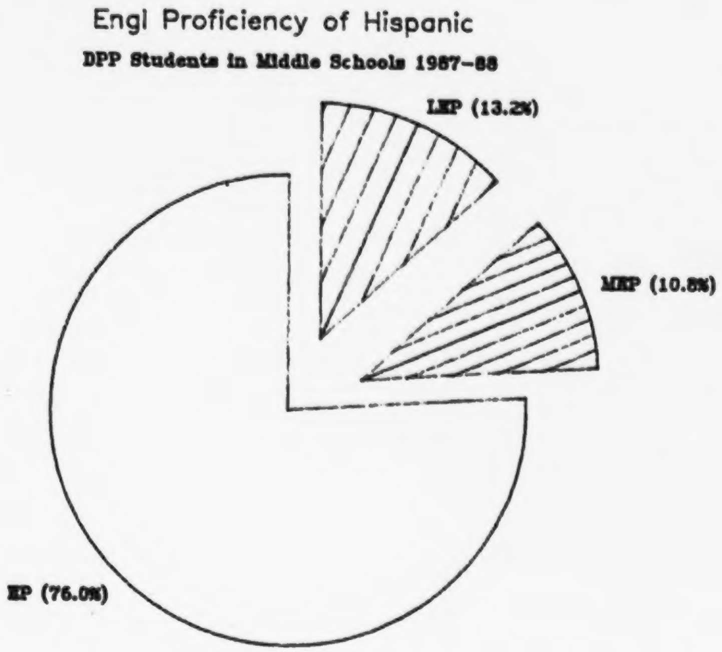


Figure
3-1

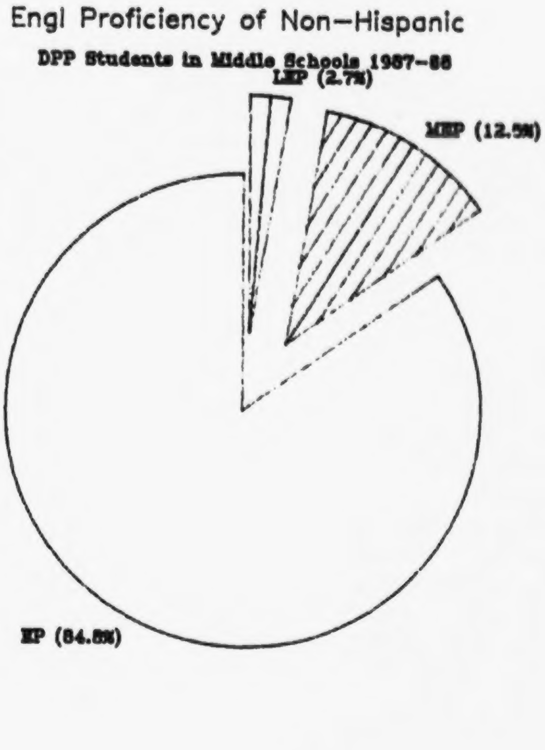


Figure
3-2

Grade. The largest proportions of DPP Hispanic students in both years were in the eighth grade, while lesser proportions were in the seventh and ninth grade. This reflects the fact that the program emphasized services to students in the last two years of middle school and that all of the middle schools contained an eighth grade while only some of them (7-8-9 vs. 6-7-8) contained a ninth grade.

Age. The Hispanic students were somewhat older for grade on the average than the non-Hispanic students in both years of the DPP. In 1986-87, 68% of the DPP Hispanic students were a year or more older than expected for their grade, compared to 64% of the DPP non-Hispanic students. In 1987-88, 51% of the DPP Hispanic students were overage for grade, compared to 45% of the non-Hispanic students. While there was a program shift toward younger students in 1987-88, the Hispanic students in the program continued to be relatively older. This could reflect their having been previously retained in grade to a greater extent and/or having been placed in a lower grade upon entry to the school system. The number of years Hispanic students were overage for grade ranged between zero and four in both years studied. Specifically, in 1987-88, 49% of the Hispanic middle school students in the DPP were zero years overage for grade, 32% were one, 16% were two, 3% were three, and 0.3% were four years overage for grade.

Sex. A somewhat larger proportion of the Hispanic students in the middle school DPP in 1986-87 was male (53%) than female (47%). Likewise in 1987-88, males (53%) outnumbered females (47%). These proportions were almost identical with those found for non-Hispanic students in the DPP.

School location. The ethnic composition of the schools varied widely. In one school in 1987-88, only 9% of the program students were Hispanics while in another 89% were Hispanics.

Services recorded.

The statistics here come from the Office of Student Progress's Monthly Summary of Service Reports. These reports were analyzed for three representative months (November, February, and May) in 1986-87, and for all ten months of the 1987-88 school year. There was some variation from school to school in recording practices and wide variations from school to school in how many services of one kind or another were actually recorded. Our analysis assumes that, on average, these variations applied to both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students within a given school, so that it is still meaningful to ask if there were differences between the frequencies of services recorded for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students. The frequencies cannot be taken to be an index of quality. The numbers themselves do not explain why there might be differences in one direction or another. Further inquiry would clearly be indicated if a difference appeared to be potentially important. Language differences among students and between students and school or CBO staff are deemed important in the delivery of services to Hispanic populations. We present findings that take into account the language variable for students only. (See Figures 3-3 and 3-4.)

Mail and telephone. In 1986-87, Hispanic students received a slightly greater average number of phone calls but fewer mailed communications than non-Hispanic students. A similar pattern was found in 1987-88. For both mail and telephone, Hispanic students who were English proficient received more communications than those who were classified as having limited or marginal English proficiency.

Home visits. Home visits were recorded as attempted (though not necessarily completed) for Hispanic students slightly more frequently than for non-Hispanic students in 1986-87. In 1987-88, the level of home visits was virtually the same for Hispanic (4.0) and non-Hispanic (4.1) students. However, language proficiency made a difference, with LEP Hispanic students receiving 3.1 home visits, MEP Hispanics receiving 3.8, and EP Hispanic students receiving 4.2. Among non-Hispanics, LEP students received the most and MEP students the fewest home visits.

Attendance incentives. Data were not available for frequency of attendance incentives in 1986-87. In 1987-88, Hispanic students received somewhat fewer attendance incentives than non-Hispanic students. Again, language proficiency affected the level of service to the Hispanic students. LEP Hispanic students received 1.4, MEP Hispanic students 1.3, and EP Hispanic students received 1.8 attendance incentives.

School-parent conferences and parent guidance. In 1986-87, Hispanic and non-Hispanic students had virtually the same number of these services recorded per student. In 1987-88, Hispanic students had slightly more school-parent conferences (0.6) than non-Hispanic students (0.4) and at least as many parent guidance sessions (0.6) as non-Hispanic students (0.5). In both years, the average number of conferences or sessions with parents was so low as to make these differences trivial. English language proficiency made some difference, with English proficient students receiving more of both parent services. English proficiency made a difference for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students.

School-student conferences and individual guidance. In 1986-87, Hispanic students received slightly more frequent school-student conferences and fewer individual guidance sessions

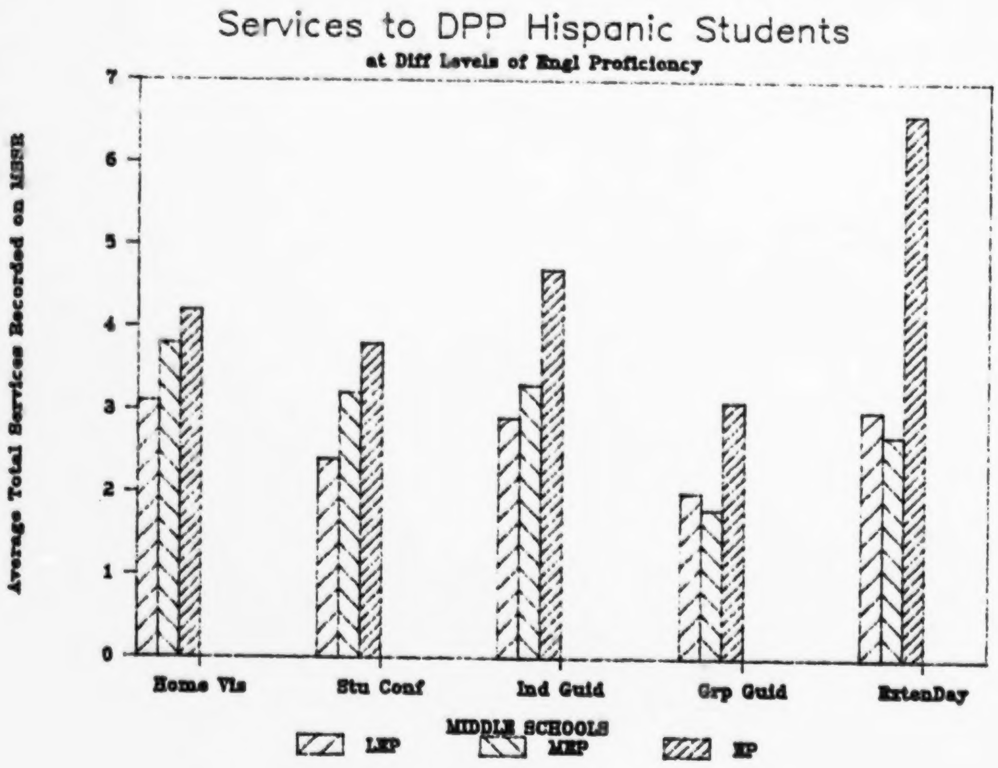


Figure 3-3

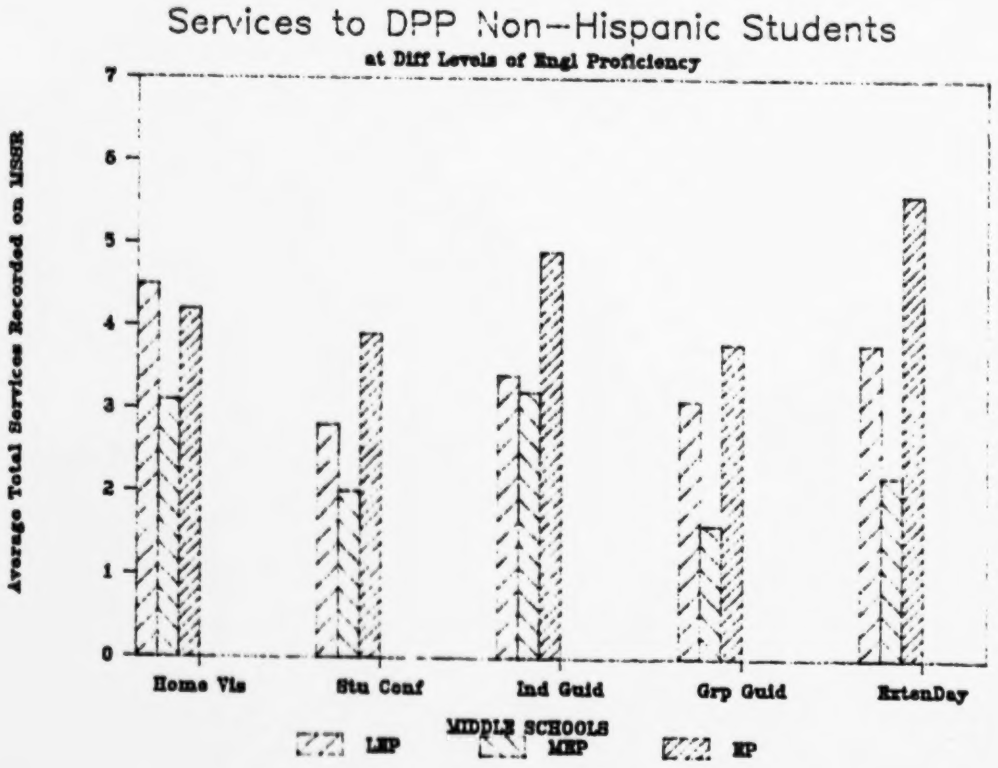


Figure 3-4

than non-Hispanic students. In 1987-88, Hispanic students received about as many school-student conferences but somewhat fewer individual guidance sessions. The average Hispanic student received 3.6 conferences and the non-Hispanic student 3.7 school-student conferences in 1987-88. The average Hispanic student received 4.3 individual guidance sessions and the average non-Hispanic student 4.6 individual guidance sessions in 1987-88. English profiency once again made a difference for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students. For the Hispanic students, School-student conferences were recorded most for EP (3.8), next most for MEP (3.2), and least for LEP students (2.4). Similarly, among the Hispanic students individual guidance sessions were recorded most for EP students (4.7), next most for MEP (3.3), and least for LEP students (2.9). Given that there was a higher proportion of LEP and MEP students among the Hispanic than the non-Hispanic students, degree of English proficiency, rather than Hispanic status as such, seems to govern the rate at which students received conferences and individual guidance sessions.

Group guidance. Hispanic students received fewer group guidance sessions in 1986-87. In 1987-88, group guidance was recorded 2.8 for Hispanic students and 3.5 times for non-Hispanic students. English proficiency made a difference to both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students for group guidance. EP Hispanic students received 3.1 group guidance sessions, compared to 1.8 for MEP Hispanic students and 2.0 for LEP Hispanic students.

Extended days. Extended days were recorded for Hispanic students somewhat more often than for non-Hispanic students in 1986-87. Again in 1987-88, Hispanic students attended more extended days (5.7) than non-Hispanic students (5.1). The number of days was substantially greater for EP Hispanic students (6.6) than for MEP (2.7) or LEP (3.0) Hispanic students. A similar pattern obtained for non-Hispanic students.

High school linkage. There was no difference in the number of high school linkage activities (visits to or from high schools to facilitate students' transition to high school) recorded for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in 1986-87. Hispanic students attended somewhat fewer linkage activities (0.6) than non-Hispanic students (0.9) in 1987-88. EP Hispanic students participated in 0.6 linkage activities, compared to 0.4 for both MEP and LEP Hispanic students. A similar pattern, but at somewhat higher levels, was found for non-Hispanic students.

Three quarters (75%) of the Hispanic students and 63% of the non-Hispanic students had no high-school linkage activity recorded for them in 1987-88. For both groups, these were very high proportions that had no high-school linkage.

Health services. The number of health record reviews, health staff contacts, or vision and hearing screenings recorded was approximately the same for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in 1986-87 and in 1987-88--in each year less than half a contact altogether for the average student. However, in 1987-88, EP Hispanic students received proportionally more of these services than MEP or LEP students. Among non-Hispanics, it was the marginally English proficient students who received the fewest health services.

Effect of clustering on services. It was generally the case in the middle schools in 1987-88, as discussed in the Middle School Final Report, that students who were clustered together in a DPP remediation or enrichment course received substantially more services than students who were not clustered together. This finding applied equally for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students. Further, it applied to Hispanic students regardless of language proficiency.

> Hispanic students who were not LEP received an average of 22.6 indirect services (mainly attendance outreach) if they were clustered and 16.2 indirect services if they were not clustered. Hispanic students who were LEP received an average of 19.1 indirect services if they were clustered and 13.2 if they were not clustered.
>
> If they were not LEP, Hispanic students received an average of 25.2 direct services (all services involving direct contact with students) if they were clustered and 15.7 direct services if they were not clustered. Finally, if they were LEP, Hispanic students received an average of 18.8 direct services if they were clustered and 9.5 if they were not clustered.

The only areas of service that were exceptions to this pattern were parent conferences and parent guidance, which may have been initiated more by parents coming to the school than by the schools themselves. The findings reflect the fact that the students were more easily accessed, and perhaps were better known and of greater concern to staff, if they were grouped together for some time in their program than if they were just scattered in their regular classes. This applied just as much to English proficient Hispanic students as to LEP Hispanic students. However, the effect of the two factors together was that LEP students who were not in a cluster, whether they were Hispanic or not, received the lowest overall levels of program services.

Effect of being in a CBO model school. The CBO model schools recorded more services in the areas of student conferences and individual and group guidance for the average Hispanic student than the School Alone model schools recorded. This same pattern applied to non-Hispanic students. To some extent, this was a function of the fact that fewer students were targeted for service in the CBO schools than in the School Alone schools, as discussed in the Middle School Final Report. For students in schools in the School Alone model, there was a further tendency for Hispanic students with English proficiency to receive more services than students with marginal or limited English proficiency. For students in schools in the CBO model, this tendency was found in some areas of service, particularly individual guidance, group guidance, and extended days, but it did not apply for home visits or student conferences. Overall, there was not a strong pattern of CBO model middle schools altering the tendency for students with limited or marginal English proficiency to receive fewer services than English proficient students. CBO schools also tended like the School Alone schools to deliver services more to clustered than to not-clustered students.

Summary of services. As is discussed in the Middle School Final Report for Year Three, the levels of service may not be adequate to meet students' needs. The differences in service levels for various groups reveal more about communication and access to students than about what levels of service might be required for effective response to students' needs. The analysis shows that Hispanic students received the same or higher levels of service than non-Hispanic students in the areas of telephone calls, home visits, school-parent conferences and parent guidance, school-student conferences, extended days, and health services. Hispanic students were recorded as receiving somewhat fewer services in the areas of mail, attendance incentives, individual guidance, group guidance, and high school linkage. The telephone calls, home visits and parent contacts in the school might be seen as compensating for a lower volume of mail, or as reflecting a preference in communication mode. Contacts with Hispanic students were made more through school-student conferences and extended days than through individual and group guidance, by comparison to services received by non-Hispanics. The levels of service in parent conferences and parent guidance, health, and high-school linkage were probably too low to make the comparisons meaningful.

In every area of service recorded, English proficiency made some difference to Hispanic students, with English proficient Hispanic students receiving higher levels of service than marginally English proficient or LEP Hispanic students. Among the non-Hispanic students, MEP students consistently received lower levels of service than either EP or LEP students.

Attendance.

As in all of our reports, the mean attendance rates reported for a group for that group's prior year, the present year, and the change between the two years, are based on the total number of cases available for each statistic. The N's for these three means overlap but are not exactly the same and thus a change score indicator may be different from the difference that appears between the prior year mean and present year mean as given.

1985-86/1986-87. The DPP Hispanic middle school students had been present an average of 78% of days in 1985-86 and were present 75% of days in 1986-87. For the Hispanic students for whom attendance data are available for both years, the change was -3% of days. Almost the identical pattern obtained for non-Hispanic students; they were present 77% of days in 1985-86 and 75% in 1986-87, and the change was -3%.

1986-87/1987-88. The Hispanic students were present an average of 78% in 1986-87 (obviously not the same sample of students as for 1986-87, except in some cases). They were present an average of 74% in 1987-88 and the change was -4%. The non-Hispanic students again had very similar attendance.

There were slight differences in the attendance of Hispanic students at different levels of English proficiency. The 1987-88 attendance of EP Hispanic students was 75%, for MEP it was 71% and for LEP it was 72%. The losses from the year before were -4% for the EP students and -5% for both the MEP and the LEP students. For the non-Hispanic students, a different pattern obtained: the LEP students actually gained in attendance (+2%), the MEP lost most (-6%), and the EP non-Hispanic students lost a middle amount (-3%). (Figures 3-5 and 3-6.)

Courses Passed.

1985-86/1986-87. The Hispanic middle school students had passed 67% of their major courses in 1985-86, passed 72% in 1986-87, and gained +4%. The non-Hispanic students passed 63% of courses in 1985-86 and 67% in 1986-87 and realized a gain of +5%.

1986-87/1987-88. The Hispanic students had passed 70% of their courses in 1986-87, passed 74% in 1987-88, and gained +3% in courses passed. For the non-Hispanic students, the corresponding means were 69%, 71%, and +0.7%.

In both program years, then, Hispanic students passed courses at somewhat higher rates than non-Hispanic students. In 1987-88 they also gained more in courses passed than non-Hispanic students.

For the several language levels, the results were rather different. Hispanic students who were LEP realized a gain of +9%, from 63% to 72%. Hispanic MEP students had a change of +0.1%, from 70% to 71%. And Hispanic EP students gained +3%, from 72% to 75% of courses passed. Fairly similarly, non-Hispanic LEP students gained the most (+6%), MEP gained the least (-0.7%), and EP students' change was intermediate between these (+0.7%). (Figures 3-7 and 3-8.)

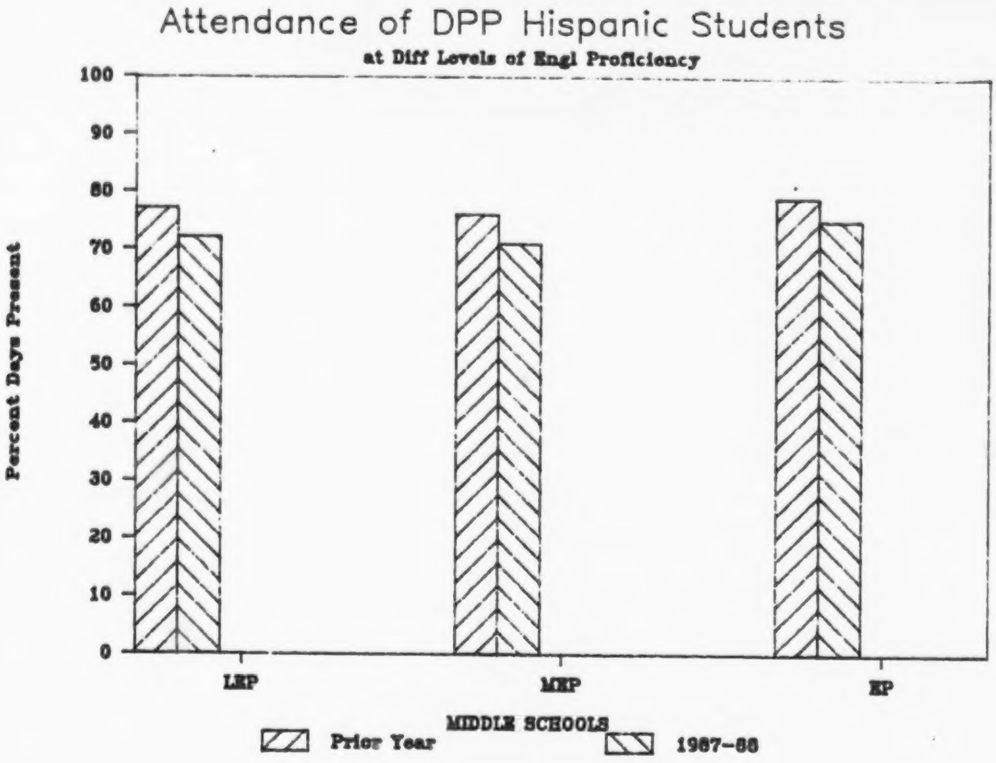
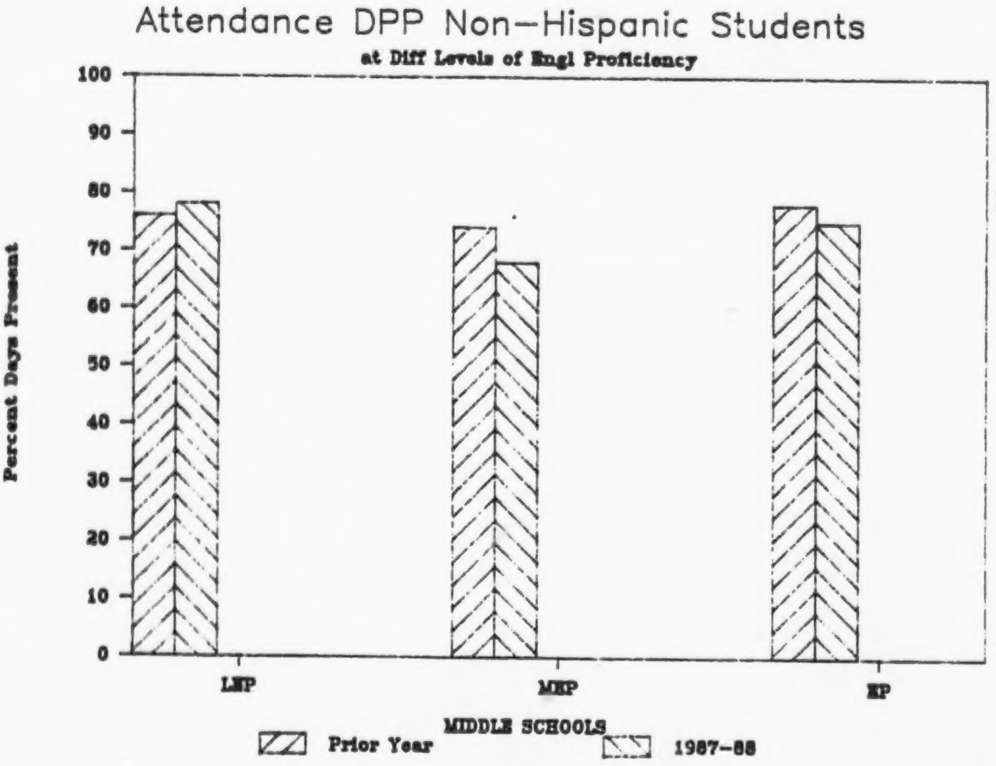


Figure
3-5



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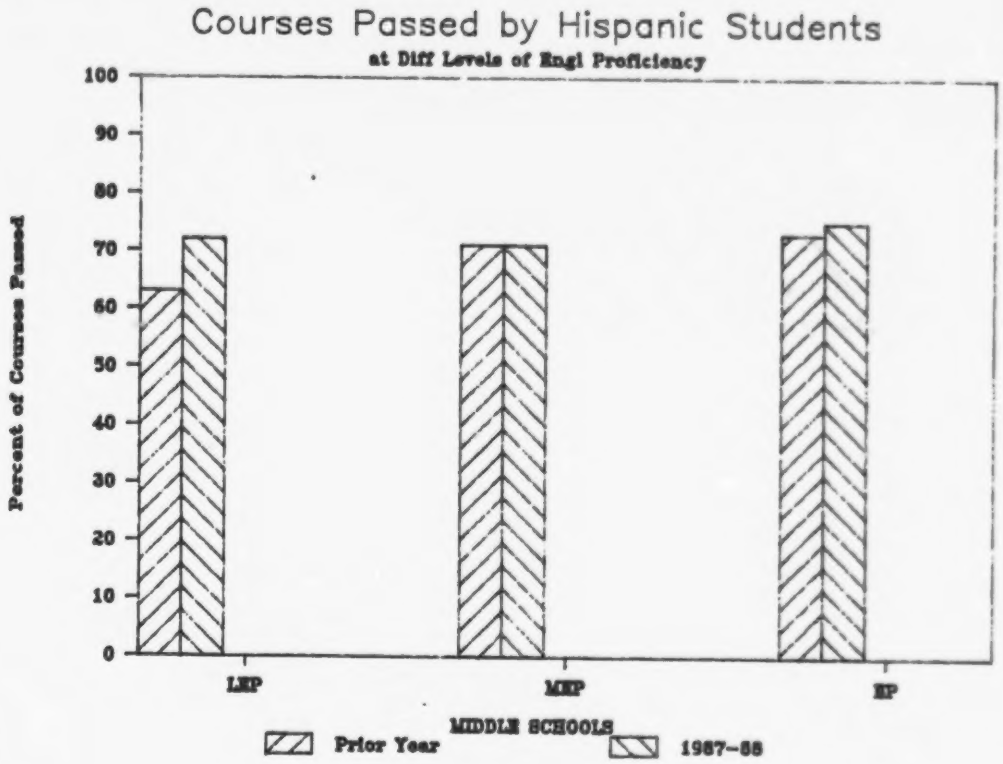


Figure 3-7

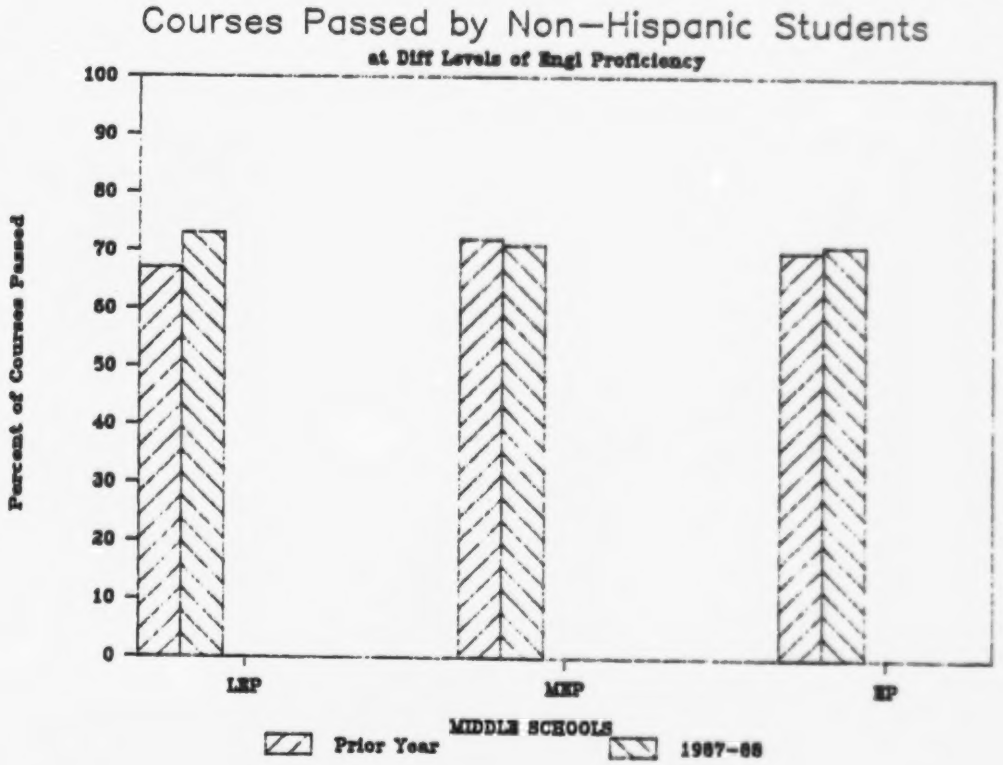


Figure 3-8

Relative to the changes that need to occur for targeted students' chances of high school graduation to improve substantially, these differences of outcome are minor variations on a theme. However, they do suggest that students who qualified for bilingual or ESL instruction by scoring 20 or below on the LAB test had an advantage. The fact that the students in the intermediate range of English proficiency did least well in courses passed underscores this observation. We have not been able to document, however, that the LEP students did in fact participate in bilingual or ESL classes. Indeed, we identified a set of schools in which LEP students had a net loss in courses passed, and found out by telephone inquiry that these schools did have bilingual/ESL classes. It may be that in these schools students who were eligible for bilingual/ESL classes were not included in the DPP, while in others they were. But we did not establish this. Finally, it must be noted that the attendance of the Hispanic LEP students was not as high as the EP students' attendance, so that their gain in courses passed is even more likely to reflect some instructional accomodation to them.

1986-87 Survey Results

The Final Report on the Middle Schools for Year Two (1986-87) presented at some length our findings for the entire sample of targeted students responding to the Teachers College survey in Spring 1987. The following comment from that report should be repeated here:

> The sample of survey respondents differs in important ways from the middle school target population as a whole. The survey respondents had better prior attendance and course performance, as well as better attendance and course performance during the program year, than students who did not complete the survey. The survey respondents were also more likely to be reported by school staff as recipients of program services than nonrespondents. In other words, according to school personnel [records], survey respondents received more program services than nonrespondents. (p. 41)

It is assumed that this observation applies generally to the Hispanic students in the survey sample. However, since most of the program students with limited or marginal English proficiency were Hispanic, their receiving fewer services must be taken into account. A Spanish language version of the survey was administered in schools where it was requested and was used by about 150 students.

Where a chi-square test showed a significant difference between the patterns of survey responses for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students, we will summarize the patterns. For many of the questions on the survey, there was no significant difference between the responses of Hispanic and non-Hispanic students. Hispanic students' responses to some of these questions will be reported, in the interest of profiling the Hispanic students themselves.

Self-identification. As stated earlier, the survey was administered to 1718 (44%) of the targeted DPP middle school students in Spring 1987. Forty five percent (45%) of the respondents identified themselves as "Hispanic or Spanish," while 32% responded Black or Afro-American, 8% said they were Asian-American or Pacific Islanders, 4% responded white, and 9% said Other.

Language practices and preferences. Only three-tenths of the middle school survey respondents who identified themselves as Hispanic reported that English was the language spoken at home most of the time, compared to three quarters of the non-Hispanic students. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the Hispanic respondents said Spanish was spoken most of the time. Interestingly, 16% of the students who did *not* identify themselves as Hispanic said that Spanish was spoken most of the time at home, while all other languages other than English added to less than 10% of the non-Hispanic students.

Of the Hispanic identity students, 48% said they themselves spoke Spanish most of the time at home, but only 32% said they preferred speaking Spanish at home. Proportionally more said they would prefer to speak English at home than reported actually doing so. Only 13% of the Hispanic students said they preferred speaking Spanish with their peers, while 83% said they preferred English with their peers. Thus we see strong inter-generational language differences for the Hispanic students.

Parents. Nine-tenths of the Hispanic respondents reported that their mother, stepmother, or female guardian lived in their home, while just under half reported that their father, stepfather, or male guardian lived in the home. These proportions were similar to those found for the non-Hispanic students.

About a third (34%) of the Hispanic students reported that their mother had completed high school or some college, 18% said their mother had completed some high school and 14% reported eighth grade or less. A third (34%) of the Hispanic respondents said they did not know how much education their mother had had. Almost half of the non-Hispanic students said that their mother had completed high school or some college, and about a quarter said that they did not know how much education their mother had had. A similar pattern was found for father's education, except that both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students knew the education levels for a lesser proportion of their fathers than their mothers, so that somewhat lower school completion rates were reported for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic fathers.

The overwhelming majority of Hispanic students (96%), and of non-Hispanic students alike (94%), said that their parents or guardians would be disappointed if they did not attend school regularly. However, a larger proportion of Hispanic students (73%) than of non-Hispanic students (64%) said that their parents "almost always know where I am and what I am doing."

School climate. There were a number of ways in which Hispanic students perceived the general school environment more favorably than non-Hispanics, others in which there were no differences between Hispanics and non-Hispanics, and no ways that Hispanic students perceived the environment significantly less favorably than non-Hispanics. At the same time, there were variations among the Hispanic students in their responses to all of the school environment questions.

Hispanic students agreed more than non-Hispanic students that teachers treat students with respect, listen to students, and care about students. Still, while 41% of Hispanic students perceived their teachers as having relatively high regard in these ways, 31% perceived relatively low regard.

A quarter of the Hispanic students (24%) said they liked other students in their school "very much," but a tenth (10%) said they liked them "not at all." On another question, 60% of Hispanic students said that they and the school were "good friends" or "friends," but 20% said "strangers" or "enemies." Again, 23% said they liked this school "very much" and 16% said "not at all. It is important to realize that Hispanic students had both positive and negative responses. Non-Hispanic students also varied considerably in their responses, but fewer were highly positive and more were highly negative.

Hispanic students were less likely than non-Hispanic students to have seen a student attack another student or physically threaten or hit a teacher or to have seen an adult at school physically threaten a student. Similarly, fewer Hispanic students reported that they had to fight to protect themselves in the school. Again, it is important that there were variations among the Hispanic students themselves, for example, that 45% said they "never" had to fight, 39% said they did "once or twice," 38% said "about once a month," and 8% said they had to fight "almost every week."

Eighty three percent (83%) of the Hispanic students said that their friends thought getting good grades was important, and 68% denied that their friends tried to get them to do things the teachers don't like. The corresponding percents for non-Hispanic students were lower.

On a variety of questions, Hispanic and non-Hispanic students tended to agree on how much they liked or disliked their classes. On a question explicitly worded this way, 25% of the Hispanic respondents said they liked their classes "very much," 61% said "fairly much," and 14% said "not at all."

Services. More Hispanic students (65%) than non-Hispanic students (58%) said that a teacher, counselor, or other adult in the school had asked where they had been after the last day they were absent. There was no difference in the proportions of Hispanic and non-Hispanic students who said they received a home visit or a telephone call, though fewer Hispanic students said the school sent a letter to their home. While the proportion of Hispanic students who said they had gone on a trip was about the same as of non-Hispanic students, fewer had gotten a prize or an award for improving attendance.

In response to a question about how often they had talked about problems one-on-one with a teacher, counselor or other adult in the school, 11% of Hispanic students said almost every week, 12% said about once a month, 33% said once or twice, and 44% said never. Responding to a related question about how often they had met in a *group* with other students to talk about problems at school or at home, 11% said almost every week, 7% said about once a month, 20% said once or twice, and 62% said never. These proportions are very similar to the ones that were found for non-Hispanic students.

Hispanic and non-Hispanic students also reported similar levels of how often they had gone to a program before or after school (44% of Hispanic students said never) and how often they had worked with a tutor (76% of Hispanic students said never).

Seventy percent (70%) of the Hispanic students reported that they had listened to students or adults from a high school talk about what the high school is like. A similar percent of non-Hispanic students reported this experience. Of the Hispanic students, 34% said they had gone with a class to visit a high school, 29% said they had gone to a special event at a high school, and 20% said they had gone to a high school for after-school activities. These latter proportions were all somewhat lower than the ones for non-Hispanic students.

Educational and career expectations. A very small proportion of the middle school Hispanic students surveyed did not expect to finish high school (6%). Thirty percent thought they would get as far as high school graduation, an additional 23% expected to complete vocational, trade or business school after high school, or some college, and 41% expected to finish college or more. A somewhat higher proportion of the non-Hispanic students (46%) expected to finish college or more.

(Figures 3-9 and 3-10.)

Asked what they wanted to do after high school, 44% of the Hispanic students responded "go to college or business or trade school," 18% said "get a job," another 18% responded "join the armed forces," 8% said "something else," and 12% said "I don't know." The proportions of non-Hispanic students' responses were somewhat higher for post-secondary school and job and somewhat lower for armed forces and something else. (Figures 3-11 and 3-12.)

A slightly larger proportion of Hispanic students agreed with the statement "I need to find a career to follow" (74%) than non-Hispanic students (69%). On yet another question, 44% of Hispanic students and 41% of non-Hispanic students said "I am confused about the whole problem of deciding on a career."

Responding to a question about how often they learned about different jobs or careers, 25% of the Hispanic students said "almost every week," 14% said "almost once a month," 35% said "once or twice," and 26% said "never." To a question about how often they worked in a group that learned how to run a business (a reference to the DPP enterprise activities), 11% of the Hispanic students said "almost every week," 8% said "about once a month," 17% said "once or twice," and 64% said "never." Somewhat higher proportions of the non-Hispanic students indicated on both of these questions that they were receiving career education.

To a question about how much school was "helping you get ready for what you want to do after high school," 24% of the Hispanic students replied "very much," 22% said "some," 23% said "a little," 21% said "not at all," and 11% said, "I don't know what I want to do after high school." Non-Hispanic students agreed somewhat more with "very much" and agreed less with "do not know."

Fifteen percent (15%) of Hispanic students said they had worked for pay by age 12 or less, compared to 24% of non-Hispanic students. A larger proportion of Hispanic students said they had never worked for pay (40%) compared to non-Hispanic students (29%).

Asked how much time they helped to cook, clean or repair things in the home, 44% of the Hispanic students said "a lot," 41% said "sometimes," and 15% said "almost never" or "never." The answers of non-Hispanic students were very similar. Asked how much they take care of younger brothers or sisters, 22% of Hispanic students said "a lot," 31% said "sometimes," and 47% said "almost never" or "never." Considerably smaller proportions of Hispanic students said they took care of older relatives. Non-Hispanic students indicated somewhat higher frequencies of taking care of younger siblings and older relatives.

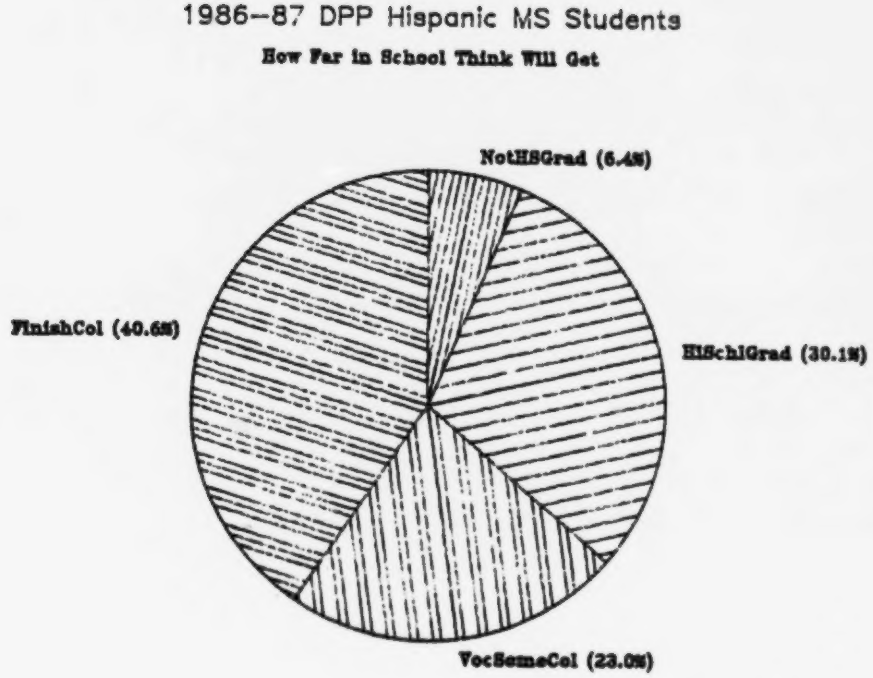


Figure 3-9

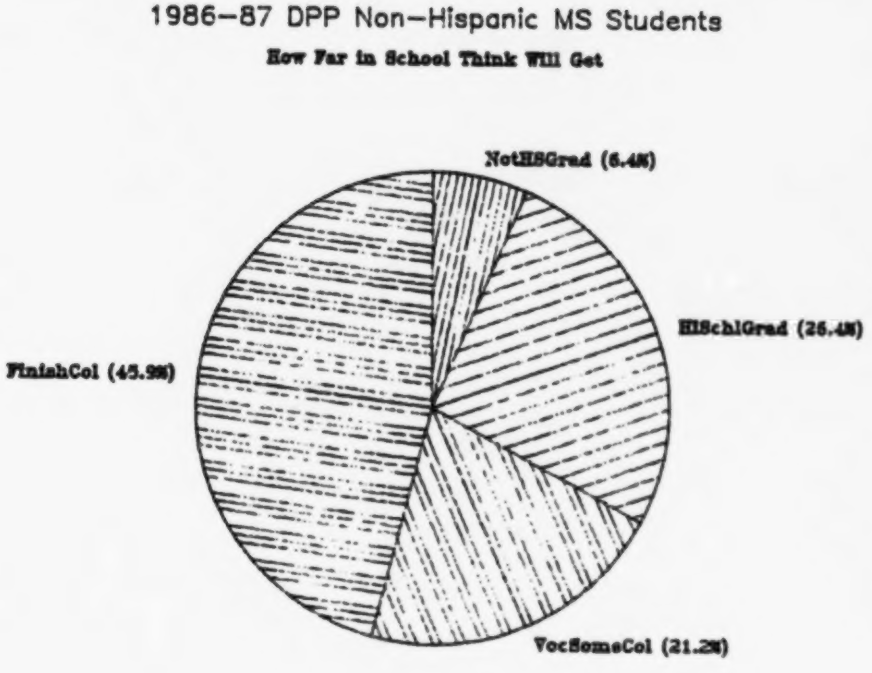
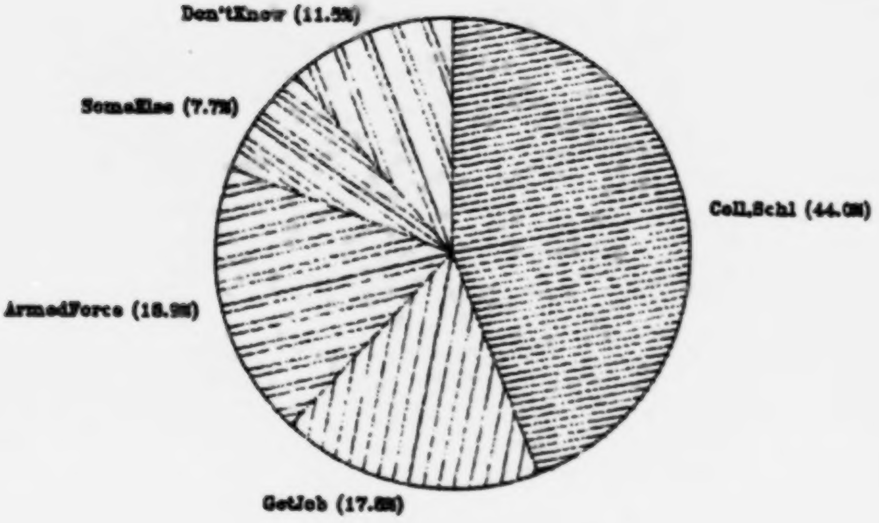
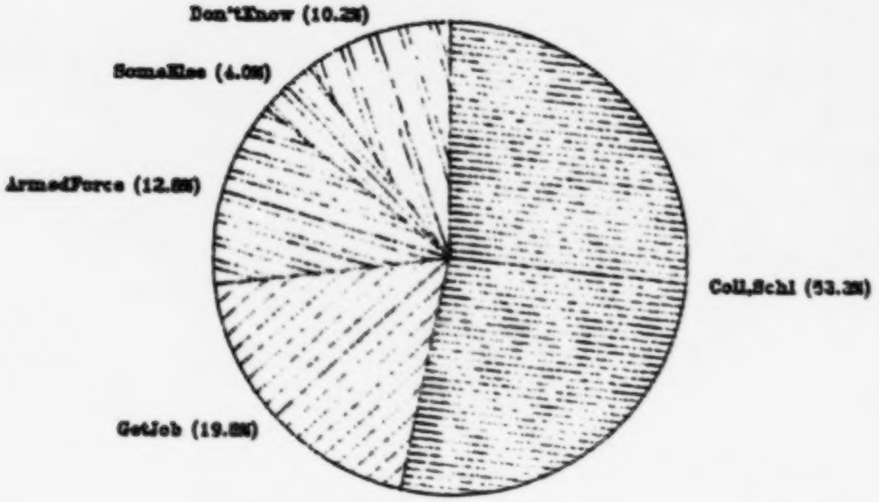


Figure 3-10


1986–87 DPP Hispanic MS Students

What Want to Do After Leave High School

Figure
3-11


1986–87 DPP Non–Hispanic MS Students

What Want to Do After Leave High School

Figure
3-12

Self-esteem. Most of the Hispanic students agreed with the statements "I have many good qualities" (85%), "I am able to do things as well as others" (83%), and "I feel good about my race or ethnic group" (81%). Somewhat smaller proportions disagreed with the statements "I don't have much to be proud of" (73%) and "At times I think I am no good at all" (56%). The proportions of non-Hispanic students giving these responses were similar.

Substantial proportions of the Hispanic students agreed with the statements, "No matter how hard I try, I never get the grades I deserve" (55%), "I often feel unsuccessful in school" (43%), and "I feel that I have more control over what happens to me outside of school than I do in school" (60%). The responses of non-Hispanic students to these questions were similar.

The area of educational and occupational expectations emerges as the one that is most likely to be associated with Hispanic students' subsequent rates of completing school, especially since the Hispanic students in the DPP were at least as successful in their courses as the non-Hispanic students, overall. Career education and educational planning need to be greatly strengthened for all students in the DPP, and might be particularly important for Hispanic students.

High School Hispanic Students

Demographic characteristics

Hispanic status. Of 1483 students in the DPP high school evaluation sample for 1986-87, 45% had Spanish surnames. Out of 1436 students in the DPP evaluation sample in 1987-88, 44% had Spanish surnames. As was also true at the middle school level, Hispanic students were over-represented in the DPP high schools, compared to their proportion of the total population of the New York City High Schools. This is consistent with Hispanic students being at greater risk of dropping out, by comparison with non-Hispanic students. It is also a function of the particular selection of 10 schools represented in the DPP. Just adding to the sample the students in the 3 AIDP high schools that were included in the DPI along with the ten DPP high schools lowers the proportion of Spanish surname students. We have not included the AIDP students, however, because the evaluation samples for 1986-87 were drawn differently in these schools. As with the middle school findings, the results here must be seen as specific to the targeted population of the schools in the DPP.

Language proficiency. Language information was not available for a sufficient number of students in 1986-87 to allow a meaningful analysis. In 1987-88, 25% of the Hispanic surname students targeted for services in the DPP high schools were classified as LEP, another 10% were judged to have marginal English proficiency, and 65% were regarded as English proficient. Of the non-Hispanic students in the sample, 5% were LEP, 2% were MEP, and 93% were classified as English proficient. As was observed with reference to middle school students, the MEP and EP categories may overstate how "proficient" a student is, but the terms are useful for this discussion. (Figures 3-13 and 3-14.)

Grade. In 1987-88, 46% of the targeted Hispanic students were in grade 9, 28% were in grade 10, 15% were in grade 11, 5% were in grade 12, and 6% were in special education. In the prior year, an even higher proportion of the Hispanic students were in the ninth grade. In both years, the general pattern of successively fewer targeted students in the later grades applied to non-Hispanics as well, reflecting both the smaller numbers of students in the later grades and their relatively stronger school performance.

Age. DPP Hispanic and non-Hispanic high school participants alike ranged in age between 13 and 21 years old. The largest number of Hispanic students in 1986-87 were 16 years old and in 1987-88 were 17 years old. Overage for grade is the more significant statistic to examine, since overage is a very strong predictor of students' dropping out. Both in 1986-87 and 1987-88, 58% of the targeted Hispanic students were two or more years overage for grade. Of the non-Hispanic students, 57% were overage in 1986-87 and 55% in 1987-88. For both groups, these are very high proportions of students at risk, but of course it reflects partly the fact that it is students at risk who have been identified for the program. More specifically for the Hispanic students, 15% were zero years overage for their grade, 27% were one year overage, 33% were two, 19% were three, and 6% were four years overage for their grade.

New to high school. Students entering high school for the first time in 9th or 10th grade were particularly likely to experience a severe drop in percent of courses passed, which in this case is a comparison to their last year in middle school. In 1987-88, the proportion of DPP Hispanic students who were new to high school, 15%, was almost the same as the proportion of non-Hispanic students new to high school, 17%.

Sex. For both Hispanic and non-Hispanic DPP students in 1986-87, there were equal proportions of males and females. In 1987-88, 52% of the Hispanic evaluation sample were male and 48% were female. These proportions were almost exactly opposite to those for non-Hispanic students, where females somewhat outnumbered males.

School location. Both in 1986-87 and 1987-88, there was wide variation in the proportions of targeted students in the different high schools who were identified as Hispanic. In 1987-

Engl Proficiency of Hispanic Students

in DPP in High Schools 1987-88

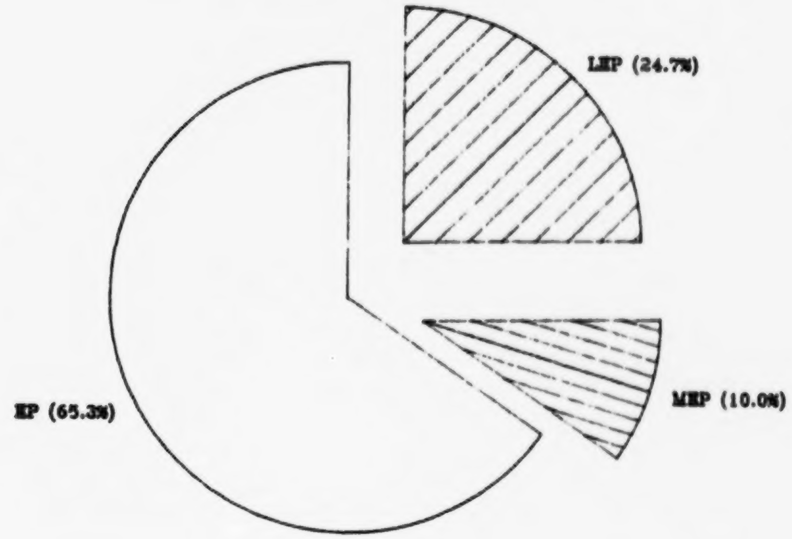


Figure
3-13

Engl Proficiency Non-Hispanic Students

in DPP in High Schools 1987-88

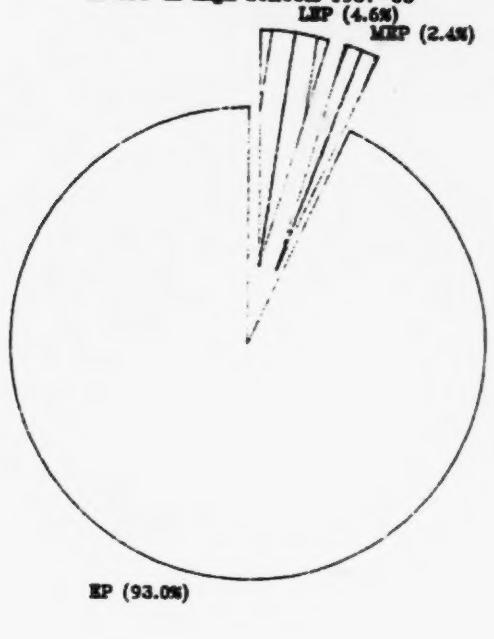


Figure
3-14

88, Hispanic students constituted 76% of the program sample in one high school but only 13% in another.

Services recorded.

There was not a comprehensive statistical record of services to students in the high schools in the DPP in 1986-87. In 1987-88, program coordinators in the high schools checked off services that were being given to students in the fall and a second time in the spring. We have condensed the list of services into six general categories. About equal or somewhat larger proportions of Hispanic than of non-Hispanic students were checked as receiving five of these six types of services: special academic program (34% of Hispanic students, 31% of non-Hispanic students); instructional enrichment (37% of Hispanic, 29% of non-Hispanic); student affiliation activities (27% of Hispanic, 24% of non-Hispanic); group counseling (43% of Hispanic, 40% of non-Hispanic students); and part-time job program (8% of Hispanic students, 7% of non-Hispanic students). A smaller proportion of Hispanic students, 47%, than of non-Hispanic students, 58%, received individual counseling. These last proportions may be confounded by the fact that a much smaller percent of students in the modified CBO model (four schools) were Hispanic than in the modified systemic model (six schools); the modified CBO model especially emphasized individual counseling.

What is most important to report is that over three-fifths of both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students appear to have received two or fewer types of service during the year. A comprehensive program of academic and social supports for students would probably involve at least four of the six categories of service used for this analysis.

We have examined what difference LEP status made to Hispanic students' being listed for participation in DPP activities. There was not a systematic pattern across activities. Special academic program (usually a blocked program for students highly at risk) was the only major type of activity in which English proficient (EP) Hispanic students were enrolled in a greater proportion (41%) than both LEP (21%) and marginally proficient (MEP) Hispanic students (22%). At the same time, somewhat greater proportions of LEP (40%) and MEP (41%) than of EP (35%) Hispanic students were enrolled in instructional enrichment activities. MEP (54%) and EP (46%) Hispanic students were listed substantially more for group counseling than LEP (30%) Hispanic students. Similarly, MEP (52%) and EP (50%) Hispanic students were listed more for individual counseling than were LEP Hispanic students (39%). Finally, while the percents were much lower for all three groups, MEP (10%) and EP (10%) Hispanic students participated somewhat more in the part-time job program than LEP Hispanic students (5%). (Figures 3-15 and 3-16.)

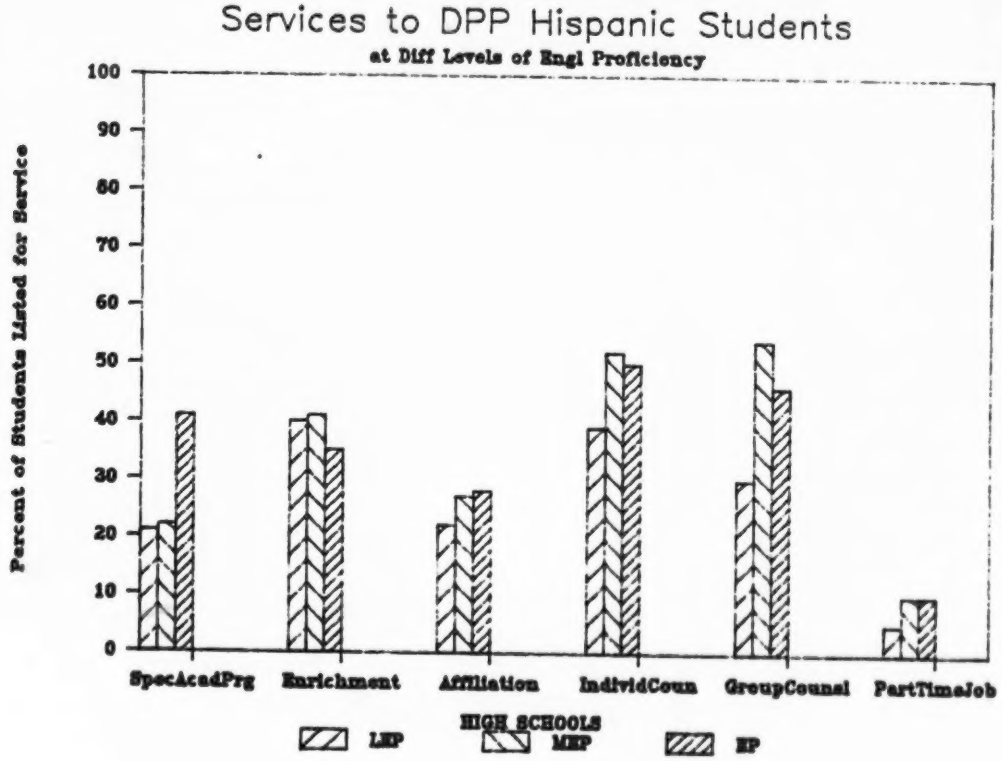


Figure
3-15

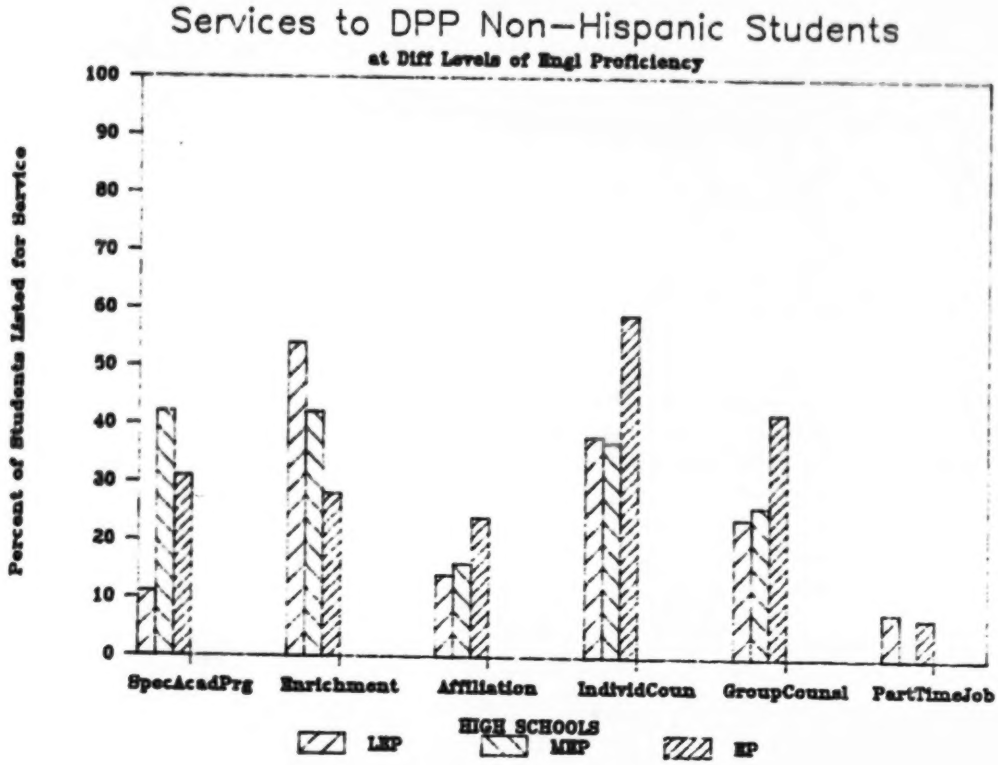


Figure
3-16

Hispanic LEP students, then, had a higher level of service in instructional enrichment, but lower levels of service in special academic program, group counseling, individual counseling, and part-time job. We do not know if LEP students had greater access to other, non-DPP academic and support services of these kinds through (their being eligible for) bilingual or ESL programs, but this is possible. Furthermore, it must be considered that special academic program, group counseling, and individual counseling tended to be assigned to students who were more at risk academically. As will be seen further below, LEP students, both Hispanic and non-Hispanic, seemed to be less at risk academically relative to the DPP population as a whole. This is not to argue that LEP students should not have more counseling etc., but that their having other types of services may have provided supports that were less available to students who did not participate in such programs. Language may be a factor in why fewer LEP Hispanic students had part-time jobs, especially considering that this program was generally more available to students who had better prior school records. However, the small numbers of students involved in the part-time job program limit the inference that can be drawn about LEP students.

Attendance.

As was explained for the middle-school section above, the mean attendance for a group for a prior year, the present year, and the change between the two years, is based on the total number of cases available for each statistic. Therefore, a given change score may be different from the difference that appears between the prior year mean and present year mean. A similar observation applies to the figures reported for courses passed.

1985-86/1986-87 Hispanic high school students in the DPP in 1986-87 had been present an average of 72% of days in 1985-86, and attended 63% of days in 1986-87. For the Hispanic students for whom there are data for both years, the average loss was -9%. For the non-Hispanic students, the corresponding proportions were 71%, 65%, and -7%.

1986-87/1987-88 Hispanic students in the DPP in 1987-88 had attended 70% in 1986-87, and were present 64% in 1987-88, for an average attendance loss of -7%. The corresponding proportions for the non-Hispanic students were 68%, 64%, and -5%.

Thus in both years of the DPP, the loss of attendance between the program year and the prior year was slightly greater for Hispanic students than for non-Hispanic students.

In both years, the Hispanic males lost more attendance than the Hispanic females. This was also true of the non-Hispanic males and females in both years, except that their losses were slightly lower in each case.

Hispanic and non-Hispanic students alike attended school progressively more days in 1987-88 in each successive grade from nine through twelve. In the prior year, the pattern was the same until twelfth grade, when attendance dipped in the twelfth grade for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students.

Hispanic students attended school in 1987-88 at almost steadily lower rates as they were more overage for their grade: zero years overage (76%), one year (67%), two years (59%), three years (54%), and four years (58%). In 1986-87, Hispanic students who were four years overage had the lowest rate of attendance. In 1987-88, the losses for Hispanic students were substantially larger than for non-Hispanic students if they were three or four years overage, while in 1986-87 the losses were larger for Hispanic students in every category of overage.

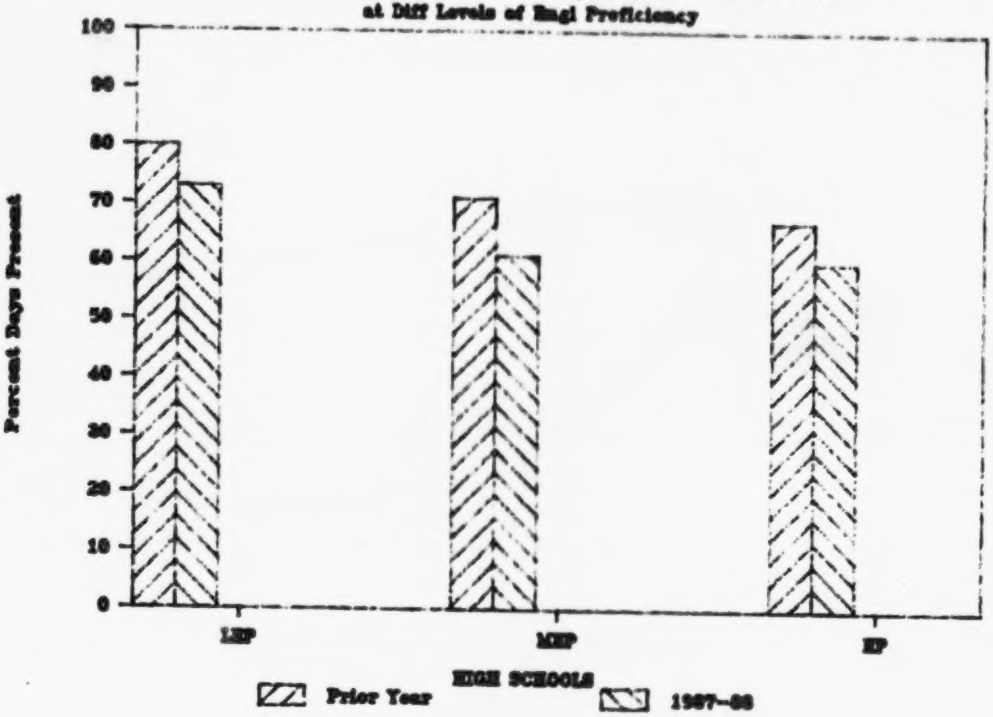
LEP status made a difference to Hispanic students' attendance in 1987-88, the only program year for which we have sufficient data. Hispanic students attended school more in 1987-88 if they were LEP (73%) than if they were MEP (61%) or EP (60%) students. The attendance loss from 1986-87 was greater for MEP Hispanic students (-10%) than for LEP (-7%) or EP (-7%) Hispanic students. The attendance loss was also greatest for MEP non-Hispanic students (-10%) compared to LEP (-1%) or EP (-5%) non-Hispanic students. (Figures 3-17 and 3-18.)

We have looked at students' attendance by whether or not they were enrolled in each of the six basic types of program activity. Hispanic students participating in instructional enrichment, affiliation activities, and group counseling lost slightly less attendance than Hispanic students not participating in these activities. Hispanic students in the part-time job program gained attendance, while Hispanic students not in this program lost attendance. All of these patterns applied equally to non-Hispanic students. However, Hispanic students who were enrolled in a special academic program had a greater loss in attendance than Hispanic students who were not enrolled, while for the non-Hispanic students this activity did not make a difference.

Courses Passed and Credits Gained

1985-86/1986-87 The average Hispanic student in the DPP in 1986-87 had passed 47% of courses in 1985-86, passed 42% in 1986-87, and lost -8% in courses passed between the two years. For the non-Hispanic students, these proportions were 45%, 41%, and -6%.

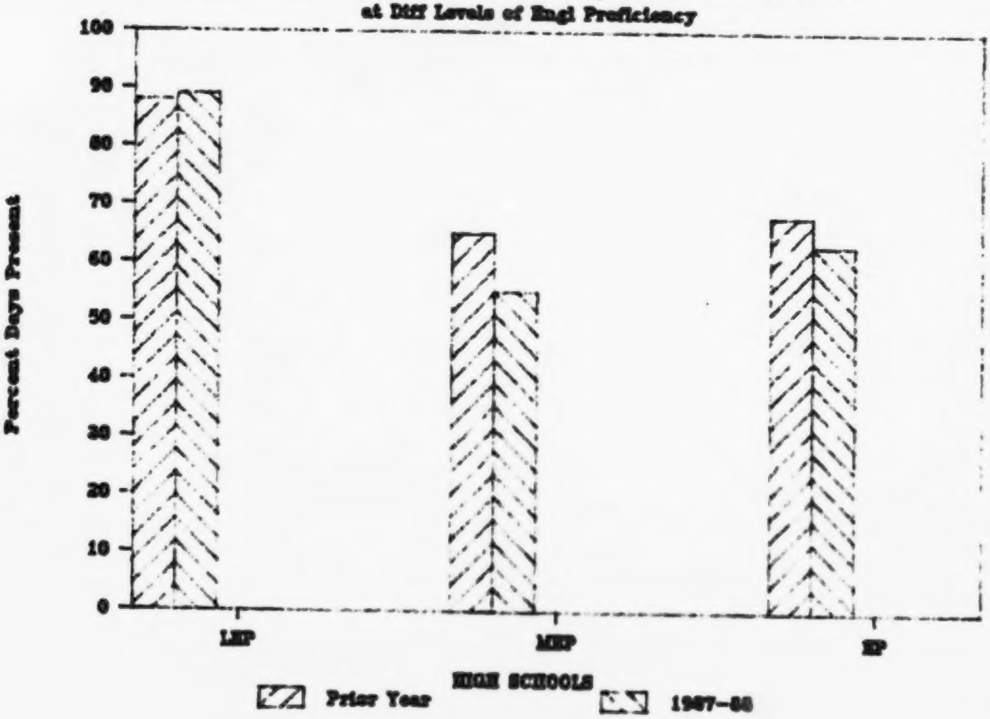
1986-87/1987-88 Hispanic students in the high school DPP in 1987-88 had passed 46% of their courses in 1986-87 and passed



Attendance of DPP Hispanic Students

at Diff Levels of Engl Proficiency

Figure 3-17



Attendance DPP Non--Hispanic Students

at Diff Levels of Engl Proficiency

Figure 3-18

44% in 1987-88; for those students for whom there were data in both years, the net loss was -4%. For the non-Hispanic students, the corresponding proportions were 44%, 42%, and -5%. The average Hispanic student in the DPP earned 4.8 credits in 1987-88, while the average non-Hispanic students earned 4.6. A slightly higher proportion of the Hispanic students, 21%, than of the non-Hispanic students, 18%, earned 10 or more credits in 1987-88, the average number needed for promotion to the next grade (though students who had been held back in grade the year before would have needed fewer to complete the grade).

Considering the data from both program years, the academic success of the Hispanic and the non-Hispanic students overall was very similar. The average success rate of both the Hispanic and the non-Hispanic students in the DPP was very much lower than would be necessary to graduate in a reasonable period of time.

In both program years, female Hispanic students' loss in courses passed was slightly lower than that of the males, and females earned slightly more credits on the average than did the males.

Parallel to the findings for attendance, Hispanic students in 1987-88 passed courses at higher rates and gained more credits at each successive grade level between grades nine and twelve. In 1986-87, the pattern varied only in grade twelve.

Overage for grade correlated with Hispanic students' rate of passing courses. Students who were at grade level passed 65% of their courses in 1987-88, those who were one year overage passed 46% of their courses, two years 38%, three years 26%, and four years 35%. The pattern in 1986-87 was a steady decline in percent of courses passed from zero through four years overage. The patterns for non-Hispanic students were similar.

Hispanic students who were identified as MEP passed courses at a lower rate in 1987-88 (35%) than EP Hispanic students (40%) or LEP Hispanics (55%). In doing so, MEP Hispanic students' loss from the year before (-10%) was greater than the loss of EP (-3%) or LEP (-5%) students. MEP and EP Hispanic students earned the same number of credits during 1987-88 (4.2), while LEP students earned more (6.3). Hispanic MEP students had accumulated a lower total number of credits at the end of 1987-88 (8.7) than EP (10.2) or LEP (13.3) students. Among the non-Hispanic students, LEP students again passed courses and accumulated credits at a higher rate, but the MEP students had the least *loss* in courses passed compared to the prior year. (Figures 3-19 and 3-20.)

As at the middle school level, documented LEP status emerged as an advantage for the students' academic achievement, whether they were Hispanic or non-Hispanic. Being marginally English proficient, on the other hand, was particularly a disadvantage

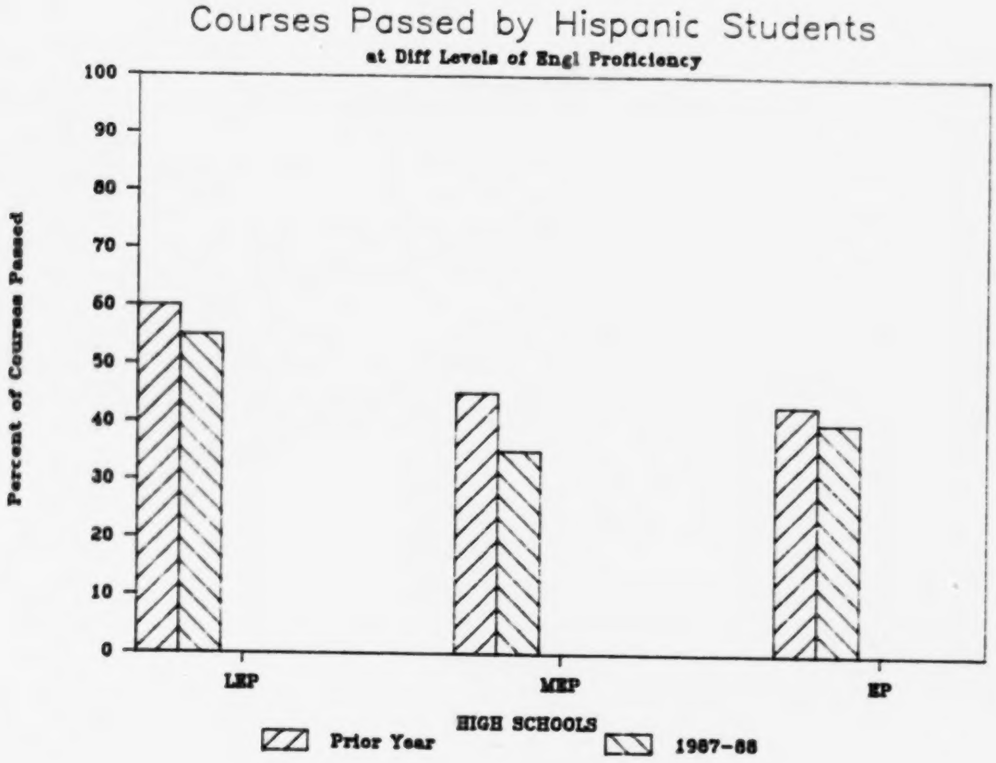


Figure 3-19

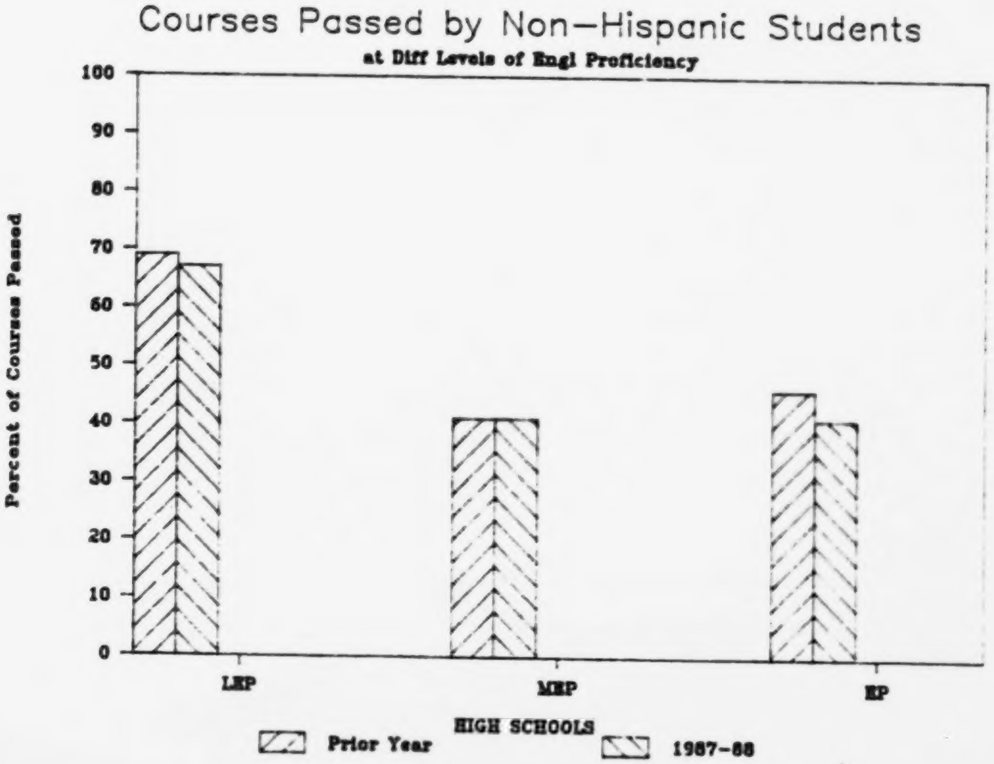


Figure 3-20

for Hispanic students, which again was found in the middle schools.

We find that, for both the Hispanic and the non-Hispanic students, those who participated in instructional enrichment had decidedly more favorable changes in courses passed than those who did not. Hispanic students who participated in basic academic programs--blocked programs, mini-schools, or transitional classrooms--had greater losses in courses passed than non-Hispanic students, but they had had a relatively higher rate of passing courses the year before, so that regression to the mean probably affected the outcome. A situation that might bear closer examination was the part-time job program. Here the participating Hispanic students had passed 47% of their courses in 1986-87, passed 42% in 1987-88, and had a change of -4% (n=47) between the two years. The non-Hispanic students had passed 57% the year before, passed 64% in 1987-88, and had a change of +4% (n=48). However, both the Hispanic students (+3%) and the non-Hispanic students (+4%) had gains in attendance between the two years. The Hispanic students were more at risk at the outset. It looks like they particularly needed supplementary academic supports while they both worked and attended school. The part-time job program tended not to provide these supports. They would be important for the Hispanic and non-Hispanic students alike if, as we will recommend, the part-time job program was expanded to include many more students.

Discharged as dropout

Unlike the findings for attendance and courses passed, the pattern of discharges of Hispanic and non-Hispanic students as dropouts varied greatly between 1986-87 and 1987-88. This reflects the fact that these discharges, being the actions of school staff themselves, were more responsive to variations in school practices and policies from one year to the next. Variations in the timing of the Board of Education's recording the discharges made in different schools are also involved. Further, some of the students who were originally targeted for services in the DPP in 1986-87 were discharged before the evaluation sample was constituted, so that the sample for that year underestimates the proportions of students dropping out.

In 1986-87, 13% of the Hispanic students in the DPP and 9% of the non-Hispanic students were discharged as dropouts. In 1987-88, 16% of the DPP Hispanic students and 19% of the DPP non-Hispanic students were discharged as dropouts.

Hispanic males were discharged as dropouts at about the same rate as females in 1986-87 and at a substantially higher rate in 1987-88.

In both years, Hispanic students who were zero or one years overage were discharged as dropouts at much lower rates than Hispanic students who were three or four years overage. Also in both years, however, Hispanic students who were zero or one years overage were discharged at a somewhat greater rate than non-Hispanic students zero or one years overage.

In both years, the highest dropout discharge rates occurred for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in the ninth grade and special education.

There was no correlation between the discharge rates for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students at individual high schools. That is, schools that tended to discharge more of one group in one year as often as not discharged more of the other group in the other year. Rates would have to be examined over a longer period of time to get a valid idea of whether Hispanic or non-Hispanic students were more likely to be discharged as dropouts in a given school or schools.

For both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in 1987-88, the one year we were able to look at this matter, students who were English proficient were more likely to be discharged as dropouts than students who were LEP or MEP.

1986-87 High School Questionnaire

Out of 1450 students chosen randomly from the Fall 1986 rosters of the DPP in its 10 schools, 431 or 30% completed a high school survey in late Spring 1987.

Academic characteristics of the survey respondents. The attendance and courses passed rates of the respondents, both Hispanic and non-Hispanic, were very much higher than the means for the sample as a whole, reflecting the fact that the respondents were in school in the late spring. The 1985-86 attendance of the Hispanic respondents was 78% and their 1986-87 attendance was 80%. The corresponding rates for the non-Hispanic respondents were 79% and 80%. Instead of the Hispanic students having a slightly greater attendance loss than the non-Hispanic students, as reported before for the total DPP evaluation sample in 1986-87, in this sample, the attendance change of the Hispanic students (+1%) and of the non-Hispanic students (0%) was virtually the same. The 1985-86 courses passed rate for the Hispanic respondents was 58% and their 1986-87 rate was 61%. The corresponding rates for the non-Hispanic respondents were 58% and 63%. Instead of the Hispanic students having a slightly greater courses passed rate loss than the non-Hispanic students, as reported before the total DPP evaluation sample, in this sample, the Hispanic students had a slightly lower courses passed gain (+2%) than the non-Hispanic students (+4%). The difference was accounted for by female Hispanic students having no change in courses passed (0%) while female non-Hispanic students in this sample gained in courses passed (+5%). Male Hispanic (+3%) and non-Hispanic students (+4%) in this sample had equivalent changes in courses passed.

As shown above, the 1985-86, prior year attendance and courses passed rates for the Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in the survey sample were almost identical. If they are not representative of the program population as a whole, the survey results reported below are all the more arresting, given that these are the responses of students who were doing relatively well in school.

Self-identification. Equal proportions of the respondents identified themselves as Black or Afro-American (43%) and Hispanic or Spanish (43%), while relatively few identified themselves as Asian-American or Pacific Islander (4%), white (2%), or other (8%). The proportion of students identifying themselves as Hispanic was slightly smaller than the proportion identified on the basis of Spanish surname in the DPP targeted population as a whole (45%).

Language practices and preferences. Hispanic students tended to prefer to speak English, but reported that Spanish was the language spoken most frequently at home. More specifically, the largest proportion of the Hispanic students, 70%, said they preferred to speak English with their friends, and 57% said that they would prefer to speak English at home. However, only 43% said that English was the language they spoke most frequently at home, and just 25% said that the adults at home spoke mostly English.

Thus, while the intergenerational language shift from Spanish to English is visible among the high school students in similar ways as with the middle school students, the degree of the shift in language preferences and practices appears to decrease somewhat. Fewer students preferred to speak English with their peers and with their parents, and more spoke Spanish at home.

Parents. There was a slight tendency for fewer adults to be living in the Hispanic student's home than the home of a non-Hispanic student. A somewhat larger proportion of the Hispanic students than of the non-Hispanic students reported that their mother, stepmother, or female guardian lives in the home (94% vs. 88%) and a slightly smaller proportion reported that their father, stepfather, or male guardian lives in the home (42% vs. 46%). Hispanic students also reported somewhat less frequently that an aunt, grandmother, or grandfather lived in the home.

Hispanic students' mothers had had less formal education than non-Hispanic students' mothers. Twenty-four percent (24%)

of Hispanic students indicated that their mother had gone to school through 8th grade or less, compared to 6% of non-Hispanic students; another 24% of Hispanic students reported some high school education for their mother, compared to 10% of non-Hispanic students; 27% of Hispanic and 62% of the non-Hispanic students reported that their mother had completed high school and in some cases other schooling after high school; and 25% did not know about their mother's schooling, compared to 22% of non-Hispanic students.

Hispanic students also reported less formal education for their fathers than did non-Hispanic students. Eighteen percent (18%) of Hispanic students indicated that their father had gone to school through 8th grade or less, compared to 6% of non-Hispanic students; 18% of Hispanic students reported some high school education for their father, while 12% of non-Hispanic students reported this; and 24% of Hispanic and 45% of non-Hispanic students said that their father had completed high school and in some cases other schooling after high school; 40% did not know about their father's schooling, compared to 37% of non-Hispanic students.

Various items with similar responses from Hispanic and non-Hispanic students. For a majority of the items on the survey, Hispanic students' responses were similar to the responses of non-Hispanic students, while for about a fourth of the items Hispanic students' responses diverged. As was also true in the middle schools, there were specific variations on many questions for different ethnic or racial groups, but the samples for students other than Afro-Americans or Hispanics are too small to be reliable. For this report, the function of commenting on the responses of non-Hispanic students is to highlight features of the Hispanic responses themselves rather than to make categorical statements about other groups.

Some of the many items for which the responses of Hispanic students resembled those of non-Hispanic students generally had to do with how good they thought their school was compared to other schools, how often in class they learned about things they were interested in, how often they were very happy in school, whether they will get good grades if they study hard, whether teachers make a student feel put down, how much of the time they were afraid that someone would hurt or bother them on the way to school, whether their parents or guardians would be disappointed if they did not attend school regularly, whether they were absent because of sickness or because of problems at home, how often they had participated in individual or group counseling, whether they got help to catch up on work when they returned from an absence, whether they felt good about their race or ethnic group, and at what age they expect to have their first child. For most of these items, there was substantial variation among the Hispanic students' responses and the non-Hispanic students' responses alike. It is important to be aware of these variations for all students. The responses of the students without regard to ethnic identification were reported in detail in our Final Report on the High Schools for Year Two, 1986-87. The present report should be read in conjunction with this earlier one, since we cannot simply repeat all of the material here. Tendencies for the Hispanic students to respond to certain kinds of items more strongly in one direction or another than non-Hispanic students will be noted in the present report.

Educational and career expectations. Hispanic students responding to the survey had somewhat lower expectations of future schooling than did non-Hispanic students. The Hispanic respondents tended to see fewer connections between their current or future education and a career.

More Hispanic students (13%) than non-Hispanic students (6%) responded "less than high school graduation" to a question about how far in school they thought they would get, and fewer Hispanic students (62%) than non-Hispanic students (72%) expected to go to some college or vocational school after high school. (Figures 3-21 and 3-22.)

A greater proportion of Hispanic students (51%) than of non-Hispanic students (39%) agreed with "I am confused about the whole problem of deciding on a career."

Hispanic students indicated more often (54%) than non-Hispanic students (42%) that they had been absent from school because they "just didn't feel like going." At the same time, Hispanic students (80%) agreed more than non-Hispanic students (72%) that "Most of my friends think getting good grades is important." More Hispanic students (74%) than non-Hispanic students (62%) agreed that "My parents (or guardians) almost always know where I am and what I am doing." By contrast, there was no difference between Hispanic students (78%) and non-Hispanic students (79%) in agreement with "My parents (or guardians) keep close track of how well I am doing in school."

Asked what they want to do after they leave high school, a somewhat lower proportion of the Hispanic students (51%) than of the non-Hispanic students (56%) indicated college or business or trade school. A slightly lower proportion of the Hispanic students than non-Hispanic students responded "get a job," while somewhat higher proportions indicated the armed forces or "I don't know." (Figures 3-23 and 3-24.)

The differences between male Hispanic and non-Hispanic students' responses to this career question were considerably larger than those of the female students. Fewer male Hispanic students than male non-Hispanic students responded "college, business or trade school" (41% vs. 49%), "get a job" (19% vs.

1986–87 DPP Hispanic HS Students

How Far in School Think Will Get

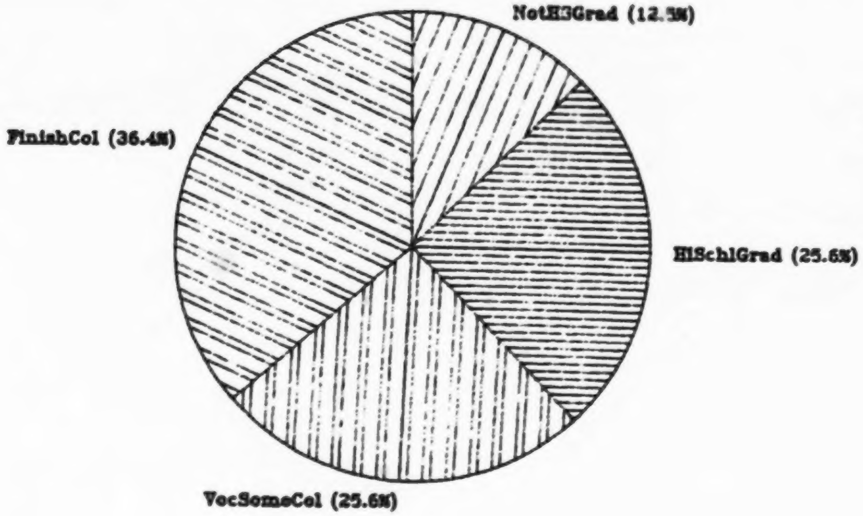


Figure 3-21

1986–87 DPP Non–Hispanic HS Students

How Far in School Think Will Get

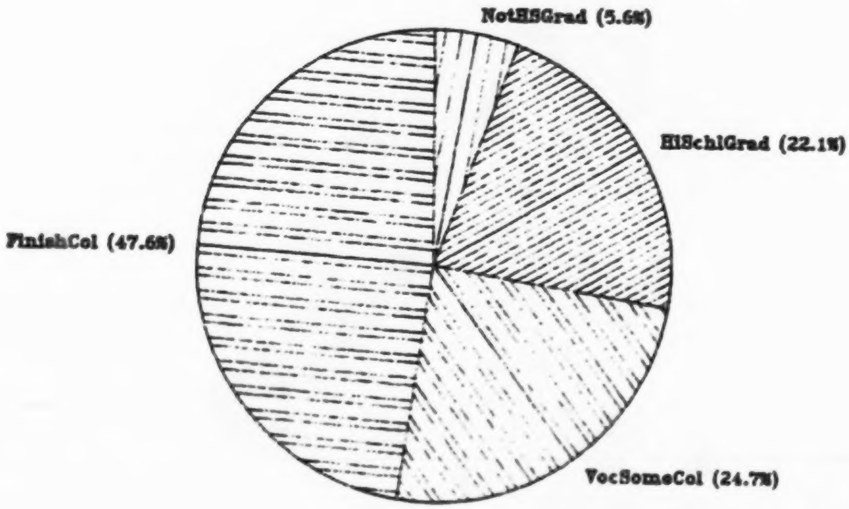
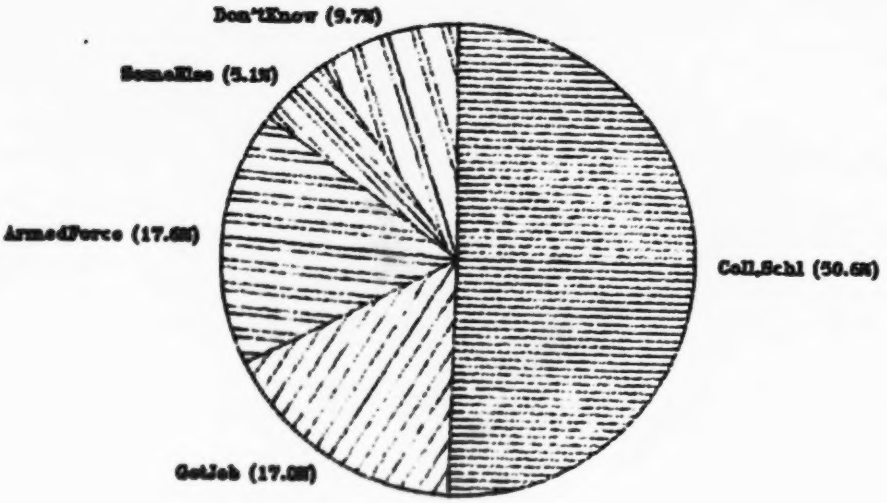


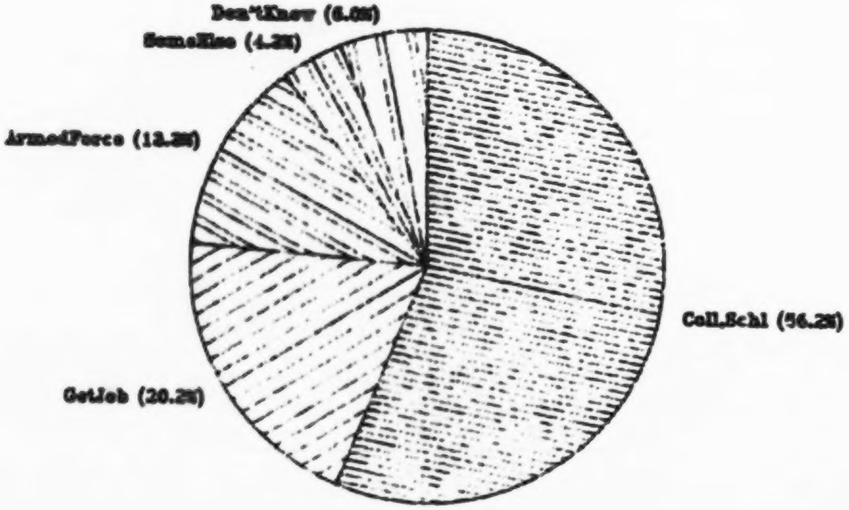
Figure 3-22



1986–87 DPP Hispanic HS Students

What Want to Do After Leave High School

Figure 3-23



1986–87 DPP Non–Hispanic HS Students

What Want to Do After Leave High School

Figure 3-24

26%), or "something else" (1% vs. 6%), and more responded "join the armed forces (29% vs. 13%) or "I do not know" (9% vs. 6%). For the females, there were relatively small differences between the Hispanic and non-Hispanic students. More Hispanic (58%) *and* non-Hispanic (62%) females than males (see above) said they wanted to go to college, business or trade school.

For a number of other questions there was a greater tendency for Hispanic and non-Hispanic males or females, but not both, to have different responses.

A larger proportion of male Hispanic students (69%) than of male non-Hispanic students (54%) responded "no" to "Has someone working in or with the school helped you with finding a job?" However, equally small proportions of Hispanic (12%) and non-Hispanic males (12%) said they had never worked for pay.

Male Hispanic students responded "a lot" or "sometimes" less than male non-Hispanic students to a question asking how much of the time they take care of younger brothers or sisters (35% vs. 54%). Male Hispanic students responded "a lot" less than male non-Hispanic students to how much they help to cook, clean or repair things in the home (18% vs. 58%). These responses might have implications for the female Hispanic students as much as for the males themselves, in so far as they imply expectations for the male and female role. The responses of Hispanic females and non-Hispanic males and females were more similar to each other than to the responses of the Hispanic males.

Female Hispanic students indicated less often than female non-Hispanic students that they "enjoy the work I do in class" (48% vs. 63%). Female Hispanic students agreed more often than female non-Hispanic students that "Most of the time I do not want to go to school" (57% vs. 43%) and that "I don't bother with homework or class assignments" (21% vs. 11%).

To a question asking "how much school is helping you get ready for what you want to do after high school," female Hispanic students responded "very much" less than female non-Hispanic students (18% vs. 35%).

Sense of control and self-esteem. On various items Hispanic students indicated a lower sense of control over school matters than did non-Hispanic students. For example, 44% of the Hispanic students and 29% of the non-Hispanics agreed with "When I don't do well in school, I usually can't figure out why." Fewer Hispanic students than non-Hispanic students agreed with "I got to choose some of the classes that I am taking" (42% vs. 58%) and "The school let me change a class that I wanted to change" (34% vs. 42%).

More Hispanic students (84%) than non-Hispanic students

(67%) agreed that "When I fail at something it is usually my fault." This may not indicate a sense of control as much as it does self-blame when things are not going right. A larger proportion of Hispanic (38%) than of non-Hispanic (27%) students said "true" to "At times I think I am no good at all" and a smaller proportion of Hispanic (85%) than of non-Hispanic (91%) students agreed that "I am able to do things as well as other people."

More male Hispanic students (35%) than male non-Hispanic students (22%) agreed with the statement, "I feel I don't have much to be proud of." Female Hispanic students (27%) and non-Hispanic students (26%) had similar responses.

School climate and program services. A number of items indicated that the social environment of the schools was more positive for Hispanic students than for non-Hispanic students. Fewer Hispanic students than non-Hispanic students said that they had been absent from school because of "problems with a teacher or other adult in school" (9% vs. 19%) and more said they had "never seen a student physically threaten a teacher" (34% vs. 21%).

Male Hispanic students more than male non-Hispanic students responded "almost always" to "Teachers treat students with respect" (36% vs. 15%) and "Teachers here care about the students" (30% vs. 16%). Male Hispanic students responded "almost never" less than male non-Hispanic students to "The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are" (12% vs. 28%). However, male Hispanic students also said more often than male non-Hispanic students that "When I came back to school [after my last absence], a teacher was mad at me or put me down in class" (21% vs. 12%).

It may be that Hispanic students are less prone to criticize an authority like the school, at the same time that are more sensitive to criticism received from the school. These and many other cultural subtleties need to be explored in greater depth than the present data allow.

Hispanic students' perceptions of school services were more mixed. Hispanic students reported participating somewhat less than non-Hispanic students in programs at the school before or after school hours, fewer responding "almost every week" (12% vs. 20%) and more responding "never" (61% vs. 52%). As was pointed out in the middle school analysis above, the overall proportion of students not receiving or participating in the service in question, in this case activity outside of regular school hours, might be of greater concern than the relative proportions of Hispanic or non-Hispanic students involved.

Fewer male Hispanic students than female Hispanic students or the non-Hispanic students of either sex reported having had linkage activities in their last year in middle school. For example, fewer male Hispanic students said they had gone to a special event at a high school (25% vs. 41%).

A larger proportion of male Hispanic students (87%) than of male non-Hispanic students (65%) responded "never" to "How many times since September have you worked with a tutor on your schoolwork?"

Fewer Hispanic females (14%) than non-Hispanic females (27%) said they did not like the students in their school. A greater proportion of Hispanic females (56%) than of non-Hispanic females (44%) said that when they first came to their school, "Older students helped me learn about the school."

Female Hispanic students (29%) reported more than female non-Hispanic students (13%) or any male students that when they are absent a lot of days, "Someone from the school visits my home."

Sixteen percent (16%) of the Hispanic respondents said that they had received individual counseling almost every week since September, while 35% said they had received no individual counseling during that time; 18% said that they had participated in group counseling almost every week since September, while 57% reported never participating in group counseling during that time. The percents for the non-Hispanic students were almost the same.

Conclusion

As was concluded from the middle school survey, career education and educational planning might be particularly crucial for Hispanic high school students, at the same time that they are vital for all. Students' gaining a sense of control over their educational and career decisions would be important aims. Improving the quality of human relationships in the school would likewise benefit all students, but might be particularly crucial for Afro-American students.

The relative success of LEP students, even if it can be partly attributed to a different orientation of more recent immigrants, nonetheless testifies to the value of bilingual or ESL education. Hispanic students who were marginally proficient in English had the greatest losses in courses passed, and this finding underscores the need for extending bilingual/ESL education to students with LAB scores under 40, as the new New York State guidelines now allow. Furthermore, it should not be assumed that all students with LAB scores above 40 or who have not taken a standardized test in an alternative language form are proficient in English, even if English is their native or primary language. What the findings may point to most fundamentally is the importance of making linguistically and culturally appropriate adaptations to all students.

In arriving at these conclusions, we risk their being taken out of context. However, we have acted on a sense of obligation to use all of the data we have collected in the evaluation to throw the most light possible on the situation of the students in their schools and the ways that the schools might be made more viable for all students.

Chapter Four

FACTORS RELATED TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATION INTERVENTION IN DROPOUT PREVENTION

Bruce Anthony Jones

Two community based organizational approaches to dropout prevention, along with a purely school based approach, were investigated and compared under the auspices of the New York City Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) research and evaluation effort. The investigations pertained mainly to the 1986-1987 school year, but also included the 1987 fall term. The analysis of the three approaches involved the utilization of a sample of ten out of the total twenty-nine DPP middle schools and all four of the community based organizations (CBO's) which were under contract to the DPP program in the middle schools. The investigation sought to examine and compare the impact of each of the three approaches on DPP service delivery outcomes along with student attendance and academic performance.

Under the first approach, or model, dropout prevention services were provided in three middle schools to a targeted group of students by CBO's that were local or "indigenous" to the school community. Under the second approach, or model, dropout prevention services were provided to a targeted group of students in three middle schools by CBO's that were "foreign" or located outside of the school community.* Under the third approach, in four schools, no CBO was involved; dropout prevention services were provided to a targeted group of students solely by school staff. The schools under this latter approach, were known as the "Project Connect" middle schools (now called the "School Alone" model).

The two varibles investigated under the "indigenous", "foreign", and "Project Connect" approaches were program structure and management style. Factors which concern the program structure and management style variables include levels of school-community linkages, parent involvement in the DPP program, school and DPP program communication and administrative support, student and staff satisfaction with the school and DPP effort, DPP staff and program participant relations and, where applicable, school-CBO collaboration in program development.

The major findings to emerge from the investigations include the discovery of major differences between the indigenous and foreign CBO approaches. This affirms the need to recognize that not all CBO's are the same and that the location and proximity of a CBO to a school community being served by that CBO may have a significant impact on levels of program structure and management style. Schools which were under contract to the local or indigenous CBO were perceived by their staff and students to have higher and more positive levels of program structure and management style when compared to schools which were under contract to a foreign CBO. Overall, higher and more positive levels of dropout prevention service delivery occurred under the indigenous CBO approach when compared to the foreign CBO approach. The foreign CBO approach was associated with levels of program structure and management style that were generally lower than schools under the non-CBO approach. In a few instances, the non-CBO approach had similar and sometimes higher levels of program structure and management style, dropout prevention service delivery outcomes and student attendance and academic outcomes, when compared to the indigenous CBO approach.

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* The DPP program itself did not make this distinction between foreign and indigenous CBO's. Both the literature on community based organizations and preliminary observations suggested its importance.

The investigations in this study involved the use of data collected from the Teachers College research and evaluation team of the New York City Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention (DPP) program.

The investigations focused on the second year (1986-1987) of the DPP longitudinal evaluation, but also collected data to compare second year levels of program structure and management style with third year (1987-1988) levels. There were four primary sources of quantitative data collection and three primary sources of qualitative data collection for this investigations.

The four primary sources of quantitative data collection included: 1. quantitative data were collected from the Teachers

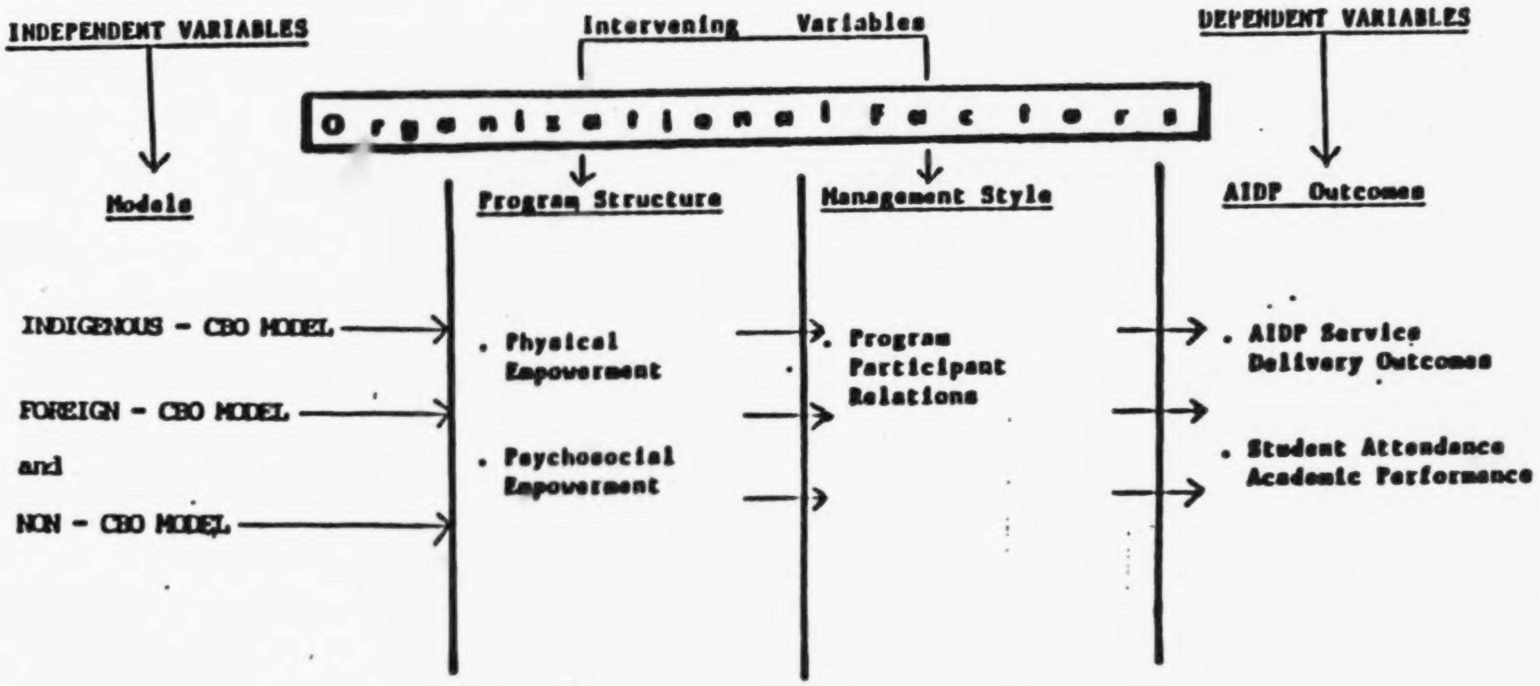
College research and evaluation team which assists in describing the program structure and management style levels among the approaches of analysis; 2. quantitative data were collected from student surveys that were administered in the study sample middle schools during the 1986-1987 school year--approximately 650 students took the survey in the ten sample schools; 3. quantitative data were derived from a staff survey which focused on the factors which are associated with program structure and management style. Approximately 40 DPP program personnel from the ten sample middle schools were interviewed; and, 4. quantitative data on DPP program outcomes, that is, DPP levels of service delivery outcomes along with student attendance and academic performance, in the ten sample middle schools, were derived from Board of Education data.

The three primary sources of qualitative data collection included: 1. qualitative information was derived from student interviews that were conducted in the sample middle schools during the 1987 fall school term; 2. staff interviews that were conducted during the 1986-1987 school year; and, 3. Teachers College research and evaluation team notes on field observations.

Figure 1. provides a diagram of the variables in this study. The independent variables comprised the two CBO approaches and non-CBO approach under investigation. The "indigenous" CBO approach differs from the foreign CBO approach because it involves three middle schools which are under contract to CBO's that are located in the school community, while schools under the "foreign" CBO approach are under contract to CBO's which are

Figure 4-1

Diagram of Variables In Study


INDEPENDENT VARIABLES
Intervening Variables
DEPENDENT VARIABLES
Organizational Factors
Models
Program Structure
Management Style
AIDP Outcomes
INDIGENOUS - CBO MODEL
FOREIGN - CBO MODEL
and
NON - CBO MODEL
. Physical Empowerment
. Psychosocial Empowerment
. Program Participant Relations
. AIDP Service Delivery Outcomes
. Student Attendance Academic Performance

located outside of the school community. The non-CBO approach, or "Project Connect", approach involves schools which provided dropout prevention services to the targeted DPP students without the assistance of a CBO.

The indigenous approach included two CBO's:

Good Shepherd, located in Brooklyn and Rheedlen, located in Manhattan.

The foreign approach included two CBO's:

Colony South, located in Brooklyn and Federated Employment Guidance Services, located in Manhattan.

The Non-CBO, Project Connect, approach was represented by schools located in Brooklyn, Bronx and Queens.

The set of staff and student survey factors associated with program structure and management style are provided in Table 1 and Table 2. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSSx) was employed, using the DEC. -20 computer for the student and staff survey data analysis. Frequencies were run which provided: (1) General Frequency Findings of all sample schools, staff combined and students combined; (2) School By School frequency patterns under each of the three approaches; and, (3) Model By Model, that is, "indigenous" vs. "foreign" vs. "non-CBO", response frequency patterns.

One-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) was performed in order to determine the significance of the school by school and model by model survey responses of the DPP staff and students.

Table 4-1

SET OF STAFF SURVEY VARIABLES USED IN THIS STUDY

QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM(S) and VARIABLES

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTOR #

1. Program Structure

   "Physical Empowerment"

   (a) School/AIDP - Community Linkages

   "Psychosocial Empowerment"

   (a) School/AIDP Parent Involvement

   (b) AIDP Communication and Administrative Program Support

   (c) School/AIDP Bureaucracy and Job Satisfaction

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTOR #

2. Management Style

   (a) Student - School Staff Relations

   (b) Student - CBO Relations

   (c) Parent - School Staff Relations

   (d) Parent - CBO Relations

   (e) School Staff - AIDP, including CBO Staff Relations

Table 4-2

SET OF STUDENT SURVEY VARIABLES USED IN THIS STUDY

QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM(S) and VARIABLES

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTOR #

1. Program Structure

"Physical Empowerment"

(a) School/AIDP - Community and Family Linkages

"Psychosocial Empowerment"

(a) School/AIDP Student Involvement and Student Satisfaction

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTOR #

2. Management Style

(a) Student - AIDP Staff Relations

(b) Student - School Staff Relations

Findings

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Staff and student survey responses revealed that stronger and more positive levels of school-community linkages occurred under the Indigenous-CBO approach when compared to the Foreign-CBO approach. Staff under the Indigenous-CBO approach indicated more often that they were residents of the school community, compared to respondents under the Foreign-CBO approach. Staff under the Indigenous-CBO approach agreed more often compared to staff under the Foreign-CBO approach that the DPP alternative education program "extended beyond the school walls out into the community to the benefit of the DPP students".

Overall, on school-community linkages, when staff were asked, "How would you rank the quality of linkages between the school and outside community", at the 0.05 level, $p=.7087$ among schools under the Indigenous-CBO approach; $p=.3929$ among schools under the Foreign-CBO approach; and, $p=.1366$ among schools under the Non-CBO approach. Differences between the approaches are significant, $p=.0002$, while differences among the schools under each approach are not significant (see Table 3).

Students under the Indigneous-CBO approach reported significantly higher levels of school assistance with family problems, compared to student respondents under the Foreign-CBO approach. In addition, students reported home visiting with greater frequency (but not significant) among schools under the Indigenous-CBO approach compared to home visiting under the Foreign-CBO approach. Students under the Non-CBO approach

TABLE 4-3

Significance of Differences In Responses On School-Community Linkages

QUESTION: How would you rate the quality of linkages between the school and outside community agencies? (1= "Poor"; 2= "Fair"; 3= "Good"; 4= "Excellent")

MODELS	Non-CBO/Model	Indigenous-CBO/Model	Foreign-CBO/Model
	2.14 (n=7)	3.16 (n=6)	1.05 (n=2)
	2.83 (n=6)	2.70 (n=4)	1.30 (n=4)
	1.33 (n=3)	2.61 (n=6)	1.75 (n=4)
	2.12 (n=8)		
MEANS	2.20 (n=24)	2.87 (16)	1.40 (n=10)
STAN DEV	.9315	.7188	.6164

(a) Differences between models are significant, (p=.0002)

(b) Differences among schools within each model not significant.
Non-CBO Schools, (p=.1366)
Indigenous-CBO Schools, (p=.7087)
Foreign-CBO Schools, (p=.3929)

reported home visiting with greater frequency (but not significant) compared to the Indigenous-CBO approach. Student assistance with employment was similar across all three approaches.

Staff respondent perception of the quality of parent involvement; staff participation in program planning; and, levels of communication between support staff and supervisory staff occurred at much lower (and significant) levels among schools under the Foreign-CBO approach compared to schools under the Indigenous-CBO approach. In addition, staff respondents under the Foreign-CBO approach indicated lower (but not significant) levels of the overall effect of the DPP effort on increasing parent involvement in the school; staff participation on the DPP pupil personnel committee; and, administrative support of the DPP program when compared to respondent perceptions under the Indigenous-CBO approach and the Non-CBO approach.

When staff respondents were asked to rank the overall quality of parent involvement in the school a significantly higher percentage of staff under the Indigenous-CBO approach reported higher and more positive parent involvement levels when compared to staff responses under the Foreign-CBO approach. Significant differences emerged among staff respondents across the approaches. At the .05 level, p=.0028. Significant differences did not emerge between the schools under each approach: among the schools under the Indigenous-CBO approach, p=.3604; among schools under the Foreign-CBO approach, p=.1622; and, among schools under the Non-CBO approach, p=.1054 (see Table

4).

Student responses pointed to much higher (and significant) levels of student happiness and satisfaction under the Indigenous-CBO approach when compared to student responses under the Foreign-CBO approach and the Non-CBO approach. In addition, students under the Indigenous-CBO approach indicated a greater (but not significant) frequency of involvement in pre and post school activities along with a more positive relationship with the school when compared to the Foreign-CBO approach.

MANAGEMENT STYLE

Management style responses by DPP staff indicate that student-CBO relations; parent-CBO relations; DPP-school collaboration; CBO-school collaboration; and, CBO participation in program planning occurred at higher and more positive levls among schools under the Indigenous-CBO approach when compared to the Foreign-CBO approach.

In one out of seven management style variables, the Non-CBO approach had a higher level when compared to the Indigenous-CBO approach. This variable concerned school staff-parent relations.

Student responses indicated higher and more positive levels of management style among schools under the Indigenous-CBO approach when compared to the Foreign-CBO approach and the Non-CBO approach. These variables concerned the level of respect students experience in school and the level of one-on-one communication, counseling and mentoring between students and adults in the school.

TABLE 4-4

Significance of Differences Between Schools and MODELS on Quality of Parent Involvement

QUESTION: How would you rate the quality of parent involvement in this school? (1= "Poor"; 2= "Fair"; 3= "Good" and 4= "Excellent")

MODELS	Non-CBO/Model	Indigenous-CBO/Model	Foreign-CBO/Model
	2.83 (n=6)	2.66 (n=6)	2.00 (n=3)
	2.66 (n=6)	2.50 (n=4)	1.20 (n=5)
	1.66 (n=3)	2.00 (n=6)	1.00 (n=4)
	1.87 (n=8)		
MEANS	2.30 (n=23)	2.37 (n=16)	1.44 (n=12)
STAN DEV	.8536	.5991	.6876

(a) Differences between models are significant, (p=.0028)

(b) Differences among schools within each model not significant.
Non-CBO Schools, (p=.1054)
Indigenous-CBO Schools, (p=.3604)
Foreign-CBO Schools, (p=.1622)

SERVICE DELIVERY OUTCOMES

Overall, service delivery outcomes occurred at much higher levels under the Indigenous-CBO approach compared to schools under the Foreign-CBO and Non-CBO approaches. And, in few instances, the Non-CBO approach had similar levels of service delivery outcomes when compared to the Indigenous-CBO approach. These data on service delivery outcomes must be viewed cautiously. According to the 1986-1987 Teachers College report on DPP program implementation, in one of the sample foreign CBO schools in this investigation DPP staff reported career guidance sessions with students as group counseling, although career guidance activities are not the same as group guidance activities. This may explain why group counseling sessions are high under the Foreign-CBO approach. In addition, one Indigenous-CBO School, included in its numerical count of individual counseling sessions a system whereby students simply signed a "check-in" sheet. In fact, the process of a student signing a "check-in" sheet does not constitute an individual counseling session. In this same Indigenous-CBO School, the Teachers College observer noted group counseling sessions which were not reported by the CBO in the data. Therefore in this Indigenous-CBO School, individual counseling sessions were over-reported, while group counseling sessions were under-reported. And, in the one Foreign-CBO School, mentioned above, group counseling sessions were clearly over-reported.

Table 5, Table 6, and, Table 7, illustrate the various levels of service delivery data reported by the schools in this study. Approximately 417 home visits and 413 parent conferences were conducted by staff under the Indigenous-CBO approach compared to only 250 home visits and 147 parent conferences reported by staff under the Foreign-CBO approach. In the four non-CBO schools, 331 home visits and 340 parent conferences were conducted.

Schools under the Non-CBO approach and the Foreign-CBO approach had much higher levels of mail and phone contacts while schools under the Indigenous-CBO approach had higher levels of home visits and parent conferences. This indicates that schools under the Indigenous-CBO approach were more likely to go out into the community and work face-to-face with parents in carrying out attendance outreach duties, while schools under the Nno-CBO approach and the Foreign-CBO approach preferred to reach out to the community by phone or through the mail.

Overall, more health, alternative education and linkage activity were reported under the Indigenous-CBO approach when compared to the Foreign-CBO approach. With one exception, the Non-CBO approach accounted for most of the total number of health contacts by schools under all three approaches combined. Alternative education contacts occurred at higher levels under the Indigenous-CBO approach compared to the Foreign-CBO approach. Although the Non-CBO approach reported the highest level of alternative education activity a school by school analysis

TABLE 4-5
*Model By Model Attendance Outreach
Frequency of Services Reported for AIDP Middle Schools

	Non-CBO Model (n=4)	% of Total	Indigenous-CBO Model (n=3)	% of Total	Foreign-CBO Model (n=3)	% of Total	Total All Frequencies (N=10)
MAIL AND PHONE	2,773	39.1%	1,952	28%	2,230	32%	6,955
HOME VISITS	331	33%	417	41%	250	25%	998
PARENT CONFERENCES	360	39%	413	45%	147	16%	920
TOTALS	3,464		2,782		2,627		8,873

*Compiled from the Monthly Summary of Service Reports in November, February, and May 1986-1987; Source: Evaluation of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative Final Report on the Middle Schools for Year Two, 1986-1987 (Grannis, 1988).

TABLE 4-6

*Model by Model Guidance Delivery
Frequency of Services Reported for AIDP Middle Schools

	Non-CBO Model (n=4)	% of Total	Indigenous-CBO Model (n=3)	% of Total	Foreign-CBO Model (n=3)	% of Total	Total All Frequencies (N=10)
SCHOOL-STUDENT CONFERENCES	469	41%	561	49%	96	8%	1,126
INDIVIDUAL GUIDANCE	1,112	21%	2,790	55%	1,218	23%	5,120
GROUP GUIDANCE	630	30%	325	16%	1,142	54%	2,097
TOTALS	2,211		3,676		2,456		8,343

*Compiled from the Monthly Summary of service Reports in November, February, and May 1986-1987; Source: Evaluation of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative Final Report on the Middle Schools for Year Two, 1986-1987 (Grannis, 1988).

TABLE 4-7

*Model By Model Health Contacts
Frequency of Services Reported for AIDP Middle Schools

	Non-CBO Model (n=4)	% of Total	Indigenous-CBO Model (n=3)	% of Total	Foreign-CBO Model (n=3)	% of Total	Total All Frequencies (N=10)
HEALTH CONTACTS	96	58%	37	22%	32	19%	165

*Model By Model Alternative Education
Frequency of Services Reported for AIDP Middle Schools

	Non-CBO Model (n=4)	% of Total	Indigenous-CBO Model (n=3)	% of Total	Foreign-CBO Model (n=3)	% of Total	Total All Frequencies (N=10)
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION	1,255	57%	723	34%	192	8%	2,170

*Model By Model Linkage Activity
Frequency of Services Reported for AIDP Middle Schools

	Non-CBO Model (n=4)	% of Total	Indigenous-CBO Model (n=3)	% of Total	Foreign-CBO Model (n=3)	% of Total	Total All Frequencies (N=10)
LINKAGE ACTIVITIES	13	7%	94	53%	71	39%	178

*Compiled from the Monthly Summary of Service Reports in November, February, and May 1986-1987; Source: Evaluation of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative Final Report on the Middle Schools for Year Two, 1986-1987 (Grannis, 1988).

revealed that an overwhelming number of alternative education contacts were reported by only one of the four Non-CBO Schools.

ATTENDANCE AND ACADEMIC OUTCOMES

The Indigenous-CBO approach had a slightly higher level of student attendance gains when compared to the Foreign-CBO approach (see Table 8). The Non-CBO approach had higher student attendance gains when compared to either CBO approach. An average of 42 of the students under the Non-CBO approach had gains in attendance compared to 37 of the students under the Indigenous-CBO approach and 35 under the Foreign-CBO approach.

The Indigenous-CBO approach had a slightly lower gain in student academic levels compared to the Foreign-CBO approach. The Non-CBO approach had a higher gain in student academic levels than either CBO approach. 50% of the students had gains in courses passed under the Non-CBO approach compared to 41% of the students under the Foreign-CBO approach and 31% under the Indigenous-CBO approach (see Table 9).

Summary

In summary, the findings indicate that not all CBO's are the same; and local in a "community based" sense. CBO's may serve different purposes in efforts to bring out the most positive outcomes in school-community based organization partnership activity.

Schools which were under contract to the local or indigenous-CBO were perceived by their DPP staff and students to

TABLE 4-8

*Targeted Students Who Had Attendance Gains During the 1986-1987 School Year in the AIDP Schools

School Code	Total AIDP Students	Number of Students With Attendance Gains	Percent of Total	Average Attendance Gain of Improvers
Non-CBO Model				
ADAMS	130	59	45%	7.9%
BAILEY	156	65	42%	7.6%
EDMONDS	160	66	41%	12.3%
GREGORY	152	69	45%	10.8%
Average for Model	149	64	42%	9.6%
Indigenous-CBO Model				
JACKSON	110	40	36%	10.3%
KELLY	102	49	48%	8.2%
LELAND	106	27	25%	5.8%
Average for Model	106	39	37%	8.1%
Foreign-CBO Model				
RUSSELL	114	50	44%	8.2%
SARAH	115	25	22%	10.8%
NELSON	49	22	45%	4.0%
Average for Model	92	32	35%	7%
TOTAL FOR ALL MODELS	119	47	39.4%	8.67%

TABLE 4-9

Targeted Students Who Had Gains In Courses Passed During the 1986-1987 School Year in the AIDP Schools

School Code	Total AIDP Students	Number of Students With Gains In Courses Passed	Percent of Total	Average Gain In Number of Courses Passed
Non-CBO Model				
ADAMS	130	54	41%	1.87
BAILEY	156	95	60%	1.76
[illegible]	160	104	65%	3.46
GALLOWAY	152	50	32%	1.98
Average for Model	148	76	50%	2.2
Indigenous-CBO Model				
JACKSON	110	32	29%	1.96
KELLY	102	23	22%	1.91
LELAND	106	46	43%	2.46
Average for Model	106	34	32%	2.10
Foreign-CBO Model				
RUSSELL	114	20	17%	1.20
[illegible]	115	38	33%	2.60
WILSON	49	0	0	
Average for Model	93	28	41%	1.4
TOTAL FOR ALL MODELS	118	46	38%	1.93

have more positive levels of program structure and management style when compared to schools which were under contract to a foreign-CBO.

Overall, higher and more positive levels of dropout prevention service delivery occurred under the indigenous-CBO approach when compared to the foreign-CBO approach. In addition, the foreign-CBO approach was associated with levels of program structure and management style that were generally lower than levels under the non-CBO approach.

In a few instances, the non-CBO approach had higher levels of program structure and management style and dropout prevention service delivery outcomes when compared to the indigenous-CBO approach. In general, the non-CBO approach resulted in higher levels of student attendance and academic outcomes, when compared to either CBO approach. This latter finding can perhaps be explained by the fact that attendance and academic student performance is heavily influenced by factors related to the classroom environment. The DPP as structured did not address mainstream curriculum or instruction issues and did not allow for direct CBO intervention into the classroom. Moreover, the thrust of this study was to examine school-CBO approaches toward dropout prevention as this relates to school-community collaboration. The non-CBO approach does not move the school toward community collaboration objectives.

Chapter Five

FINAL SUMMARY OF THE DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE EVALUATION

Joseph C. Grannis

Introduction

In this chapter we undertake a summary of the major findings of the Teachers College evaluation of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative (DPI), from its inception in 1985-86 ("Year One") through 1987-88 ("Year Three"). The multitude of questions the evaluation was expected to answer, the necessity of producing "Final" reports for policy makers each year, the method of balancing quantitative with qualitative assessment, and the sheer number of schools, community based organizations, and students involved in the DPI, have resulted in eight volumes of reports totaling over 1500 pages. By the very nature of its orientation to specific contexts and to the distinctive patterns of events and behavior in these contexts, qualitative research almost defies summarization. We believe that much has been learned in the course of the DPI that can only be fully grasped by reading the reports in detail. Both science and policy require summaries, however. Our strategy has been to try to write the summaries as concisely, but only as concisely, as could be done without utterly masking the complexity of the situations we have analyzed.

The summaries of each of our previous reports are reprinted as Appendices to this last report. The present summary cannot condense all of the information even in these earlier summaries, but the reader will be in a position to examine the findings at successively more specific levels in the separate summaries and the original reports themselves.

This summary should be informed from the outset by the finding that, overall, the Dropout Prevention Initiative did not substantially improve students' attendance or courses passed and probably did not reduce students' dropping out from the schools. The courses passed rate did improve by very small percentages at the middle school level during students' actual program year, but not enough to alter the average student's prospects for completing high school. The dropout discharge rate was lower for high school students during the year in which they were targeted for services than it was for comparison students, but it appears that over half of the students who were targeted for services are likely to be discharged as dropouts, while less than a fourth, at most, will attain a high school diploma or the GED. These findings did vary from one school to another. This argues for school-based planning that takes into account the specific problems and resources of each school, and for accountability in a framework of goals and shared responsibility for student outcomes.

Program background

The Dropout Prevention Initiative was established in 1985 by the New York City Board of Education, the City's Office of Management and Budget, and the Mayor's Office of Youth Services, with over $40 million in special city funding for the first three years of program operation. The Initiative was organized with both a high school and a middle school component. Its explicit goals were to target services to at-risk students and to demonstrate improved attendance and progress toward school completion on the part of targeted students. The DPI involved community-based organizations (CBOs) in service delivery, initially in 14 of the 29 middle schools, and in all 13 of the high schools in the DPI. The DPI provided for an outside evaluation, contracted to Teachers College, for the purpose of assessing the contribution of the CBOs to dropout prevention and more generally to examine program implementation and outcomes at model, school, and individual levels. The evaluation has involved extensive observations, interviews, and surveys in the schools, as well as the collection and analysis of quantitative data on student characteristics, services to students, and student attendance, courses passed, and discharge status.

An Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention (AIDP) Program had been established in New York City with New York State funding prior to the creation of the DPI, in 69 middle schools and in 26 high schools. The DPI was created to extend the AIDP program into a new set of schools with city funding, but to go beyond the AIDP in stimulating systemic interventions in the high schools and in experimenting more broadly with the use of CBOs at both the middle school and the high school level. The program in three of the DPI high schools was actually administered by the AIDP; however, the schools were included with the DPI to evaluate the effects of different models. The program in the other ten DPI high schools was administered as the Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) by a special Office for Dropout Prevention in the Board of Education. Finally, the program in both the 69 AIDP and the 29 DPI (or DPP) middle schools was administered by the Office of Student Progress, another central Board of Education unit that coordinated with the community school districts in which the middle schools were located. The 29 DPI middle schools were located in 10 community school districts and were feeders to the 10 zoned high schools that constituted the DPP.

Students in the DPI

Targeted students had to meet one or more of various criteria of program eligibility. The primary criteria concerned prior year or prior semester attendance. Other criteria included a history of academic course failure due to excessive cutting, previous participation in the DPI or AIDP, and being referred by the principal as "at-risk" for another reason.

The total number of students targeted for services in the 29 DPI middle schools was approximately 4330 in 1985-86, 3922 in 1986-87, and 4752 in 1987-88. In the 13 DPI high schools, the total number of targeted students was 6898 in 1985-1986, 4854 in 1986-87, and 4781 in 1987-88. Changes in the funding formulas accounted for the different enrollments in the different years. At the high school level particularly, the number of students who were eligible for the program but *not* targeted for services was greater than the number who were included in the program.

Student characteristics were consistent over the three years of the DPI.

> At the middle school level, in each year, slightly more than half of the targeted students were male, while almost half were female; boys' rate of passing courses in the prior year was lower than girls' rate, even though boys and girls had attended school at the same rates and had about the same scores on standardized achievement tests; about one half of the targeted students were in the eighth grade, one third were in the seventh grade, and one fifth were in the ninth grade; nearly half the students were overage for grade, including a sixth or more who were at least two years overage for grade; the average prior year attendance of targeted students was below 80%, and between a third and a half of the students had been absent 40 days or more in the prior school year; half or more of the students had failed two or more major courses in the prior year; well less than a tenth of the students were identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP), although substantially more students could be regarded as having marginal English proficiency.
>
> In the DPI high schools, again slightly more than half of the targeted students were male and almost half were female, and again males' rate of passing courses was lower in the prior year; over three quarters of the students were in the ninth and the tenth grades, while the smallest proportion were in the twelfth grade; at least three-quarters of the program students were one or more years overage for grade, and half of the students were at least two years overage; students' average prior year attendance was about 70% and between two- and three-fifths had been absent 40 or more days the prior year; the average student had passed less than half of his or her courses during the prior year in school; and again small percents were identified as LEP, although more might be regarded as having marginal English proficiency.

Describing the student population in these ways suggests at first that the students were or are the problem rather than their schools. Similarly, the whole original language of the program, emphasizing "services" to "at risk students," indicated that it was students who needed to be changed or helped more than schools. An analysis that the evaluation made of the records of

Pupil Personnel Committee meetings in the middle schools showed that students' performance in school was almost invariably interpreted in terms of problems at home or personal problems of the students--discipline problems of boys, health problems of girls--and rarely attributed to teachers, the curriculum, or some other feature of the school. Yet it is the reaction to boys' behavior, not the behavior alone, that results in their having lower course pass rates than girls. A lack of articulation between elementary school and middle school, and again between middle school and high school, contributes to the pileup of overage students at these levels, especially in the ninth and tenth grades. The evaluation found that middle school targeted students attended school the greatest percent of days in September and then for decreasing percents through most of the subsequent months, suggesting that it is something wrong with school, not just problems at home, that accounts for students' declining school attendance. The evaluation attempted to convey this different way of construing the dropout problem, especially in its reports on Year Two and Year Three.

Services to students

The DPI was meant to combine seven components of service to students: program facilitation, attendance outreach, guidance and counseling, health services, school linkage, alternative educational programs, and in the ten DPP high schools, increased school security. Statistical analyses of the services recorded, in the middle schools on a Monthly Summary of Service Report and in the high schools on a checkoff completed by coordinators and a more detailed log of services maintained by staff in some schools, indicated that the average student did not receive the full complement of services that the rationale of the program called for. School linkage activities, either to smooth middle school students' passage to high schools or to ease the transition of new high school students into their schools, were recorded less than once a year for the average targeted student, as were health services facilitated by the DPI. Guidance and counseling were recorded at the highest levels except attendance outreach, but even these levels did not reflect a sustained program of guidance for the average student. The majority of the students in both the middle schools and the high schools were involved in alternative education, and this did approach the level of service anticipated for the program. The evaluation observed, however, that for middle school students this was not truly an alternative to their regular education, but an add-on that did not transform their regular classroom experience. In the high schools, blocked programming, mini-schools, and PM schools did attempt to create more complete alternatives, but these for the most part could not be isolated from a larger school environment that was observed to have various negative effects on students.

Rather than suggest that the solution is either to abandon these measures or to add still more attendance outreach, guidance and counseling, linkage, and so on, as discrete services to be carried out by still more staff, the evaluation has increasingly argued that more of these functions need to be integrated into the work of the core educational staff, first of all the teachers. The general work environment needs to be improved for staff and students alike, through reduced class size, houses or subschools, physical plant restoration, and school-based planning with appropriate information and resources. These conclusions run ahead of this summary of findings from the evaluation, but are a necessary perspective on the services. In fact, a phenomenal number of services were recorded--tens of thousands every year at the middle school level, where more precise records were kept. In more cases than not, staff really thought they were giving a service. It would be foolish to ignore staff's perception or to discount the enormous scale of the DPI effort. We argue that such an investment has to pay off in some form, but that to do so the goals of the program have to be shared and actively supported by all sectors of the school.

Some more specific observations on services follow.

Facilitation or administration of the program was carried out by a facilitator in a middle school and by a coordinator in the high schools. At both levels, the role was initially meant to be filled by a teacher, though a few exceptions to this developed in the middle schools. Part of the role included responsibility for the funding process--budgeting, procurement, and reimbursement--which seemed to throw up new obstacles in each year, especially for middle school facilitators. At the same time, the program enhanced the discretionary funds available in a school to use for student-related purposes. Facilitators and coordinators found their jobs to be more manageable when they were assigned to them full time. Even so, the effectiveness of facilitators and of the dropout prevention team generally depended not only on their own skills but on their being empowered by an actively supporting principal. At the end of the three years, there was still strong variation between the schools in how closely the school and CBO staffs collaborated and in how integrated the dropout prevention effort was into the more general program and environment of the school.

In the schools where CBOs were involved, facilitation was in fact undertaken by CBO site supervisors as well as by the Board of Education staff officially designated as facilitators and coordinators. Cooperation between a CBO and a school depended on the school or district's having had some say in the selection of the CBO and on the principal's fostering their collaboration. Territorial issues figured in the contract being terminated for one CBO after a year of trying to work in one district with three middle schools. This left 11 middle schools with CBO and school DPI staff, and 18 schools with school DPI staff alone, in Years Two and Three. One of the special studies carried out by the evaluation made a further distinction between "indigenous" and "foreign" CBOs on the basis of headquarters location and raised questions about which CBOs were in the best position to draw on community resources in their work with students. This study found that in schools which were under contract to a local CBO there were higher levels of student satisfaction with the program and more positive staff perceptions of CBO relationships with other school staff, students, and parents, than in schools which had contracted with a CBO from outside the community school district.

The funding process for CBOs improved markedly between Year One and Year Three, as a result of the Board of Education's establishing a Division of Planning, Program Development, and External Relations, partly in response to CBO complaints about late funding of their components.

Linkage between middle schools and high schools was found to be very weak in Year One and did not improve in the slightest thereafter. The Division of High Schools charged the high schools to develop plans for linkage, but the relevant budgets for high schools were approved so late in Years Two and Three that linkage activity barely got underway before the spring. Meanwhile, OSP did not even try to monitor linkage activities in the middle schools in the winter, presumably because they could not be carried out without the high schools. A few high schools had staff who were invested in linkage and who had good relations with middle schools, and in these schools there were more appropriate visits arranged for students and staff. Even in these cases, however, the average targeted student participated in far fewer activities than would be required to make a good choice of high school and a good transition to high school. A much larger, computer assisted and perhaps CBO facilitated process of familiarizing students with high schools, integrated with students' educational planning in the middle schools, was clearly needed.

Attendance outreach consisted of letters, phone calls, and home visits to absent students. School and CBO staff repeatedly claimed that home visits were especially important, but only some family workers seemed to use the visits effectively, while others seemed more to be meeting quotas for the number of home visits to be attempted, or carrying out functions that were more bureaucratic than supportive. Many cases of students being brought back through attendance outreach were documented. However, a lack of correlation between the outreach and subsequent attendance for students overall--once previous attendance was accounted for--suggested to the evaluation that attendance outreach further alienated as many students and families as it brought back.

Extensive interviewing and observation in the attendance offices of eleven of the high schools showed that an enormous effort was being expended in the face of many obstacles to reach absent students. However, in most schools there was no formal mechanism to know who the targeted students were and there were grave failures of communication between attendance office personnel, other staff of the school, and CBO staff. Attendance outreach was at one and the same time recognized to be important but not well integrated in the work of the school.

The Board of Education's Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) has recently published its own evaluation of the parallel AIDP middle school program for 1987-88. OREA did an intensive study of a stratified random sample of 18 schools and found a strong positive correlation between the average number of phone calls made in a school to targeted students and the school's average percent of targeted students with attendance improvement. Teachers College performed a similar analysis for the 29 DPI middle schools and did not find a significant correlation, in either Year Two or Year Three. Teachers College did report for Year Two that the four schools with the highest attendance gains recorded more home visits than the four with the lowest attendance gains, and this was found again in Year Three. However, when all 29 DPI schools were examined, there was not a significant correlation between a school's average number of home visits per student and its average attendance change. Further qualitative as well as quantitative studies are required to identify the effects of attendance outreach more securely.

Guidance and counseling involved crisis intervention most of all, together with individual and group counseling focused on attendance, academic guidance, life skills, and career education. A picture that emerged especially clearly at the high school level was that the needs of the students always seemed to be much greater than could be met even with an expanded counseling staff. This pointed to the need for a more comprehensive advisory and mentoring system, in which the entire adult staff of the school is personally responsive to the students, while the guidance and counseling staff provides the professional services that remain beyond the capabilities of the general staff. Even with such a system, guidance and counseling staff might need to be expanded still farther.

Alternative education commanded virtually as much budget as guidance and counseling in the middle schools and the high schools.

In the middle schools, alternative education at first consisted largely of career education and then in the last year shifted mainly to remedial instruction. In each year, programs were identified in individual schools that seemed to contribute positively to students' performance. Hands-on enterprise activity and trips provided a medium for work experience and positive staff-student relationships in some schools that had improved attendance in the first and second years. Well-planned and provisioned remedial instruction programs were observed in some schools. In a greater number of other cases, however, the alternative education programs appeared to be uninspired or inadequately implemented. What seemed to be needed was an empowering of the schools to take alternative education more into their own hands, which in fact the Office of Student Progress set out to do in the spring of Year Two, planning for the fall of

Year Three. After the schools were allowed to choose one of four models for alternative education, however, the New York State Assembly stipulated that the Pupil Compensatory Education Need (PCEN) funds that the Board of Education intended to use for alternative education could only be applied if certain strict guidelines were followed, especially only if students had scored below the 50th percentile on a standardized test. The result was that most of the plans that schools had made for the fall of Year Three had to be thrown out or revised; staffing and students' programs had to be changed, in many cases well after the fall semester had begun; and the effect on staff effectiveness and morale was just the opposite of what OSP had intended. Ironically, the program disproportionately included the students who were the most available in the early fall when the clusters were being formed, i.e., *students who had higher attendance at the beginning of the year*. The attendance and courses passed of the students who were clustered for the remediation were thus found to be higher than the attendance and courses passed of the students who were not included in the remediation clusters, due not to the effect of the program but rather to the selection of students. It was further found that the students in the clusters received more services than the students scattered in the regular classes. This did demonstrate, as OSP had intended, that academic groupings were an efficient location for reaching students who were in school. However, the students reached in this way were not necessarily the ones who needed services the most.

There was the beginning of a response in the middle schools to an evaluation recommendation that processes be developed to help absent students make up work when they returned to schools. A PCEN requirement that the remediation courses have individual student work folders could also be seen as a step in this direction. Still, much more needed to be done with instructional processes in the main curriculum of the schools to adapt better to the students' needs and interests. Calling the intermediate and junior high schools of New York City "middle schools" is a euphemism that thinly disguises the fact that most of the schools bore little resemblance, in organization, curriculum, or social climate, to what the term "middle schools" stands for in educational discussions today.

In the high schools, there was an increasing emphasis on alternative education between Year One and Year Three, but the program only began to confront problems that alternative education needs to address.

One high school pioneered the PM School concept, which subsequently began to spread to other schools; in this same school, a Just Community curriculum was developed in a partially-blocked program for students retained in the ninth grade. Each of these inventions served some students well, yet overall the attendance and courses passed rates continued to fall for targeted students in the school. In this school a "cluster program" that was thought to be a forerunner of the house plan idea involved many faculty from the outset but was observed to have some very pronounced features of tracking--in the ways students were selected for the clusters, in the students' initial school experiences, and in the very different academic programs and success of the students in the various clusters. It could be said that this school validly took a systemic approach to the dropout problem, but that it only crossed the threshold of the situations that it needed to become aware of and to deal with to improve the school environment for all students.

In another high school a GED (General Equivalency Diploma) program was established, the first approved by New York State for a New York City high school, and a variety of course arrangements were created to hold students in school until they could enter the GED program. A large number of students obtained GEDs, and targeted students not yet in the GED program had relatively high rates of course improvement. School and CBO staff worked closely together to develop these arrangements. Still, attendance fell substantially for targeted students and fell drastically for students not in the DPI. In this school too, the program might be said to be only beginning to deal with problems in the larger school environment.

Alternative education in most of the schools was even further back, for example as the curriculum of their minischools or blocked programs tended to be derived from the curriculum offered in the school generally, and only superficially adapted to the needs of targeted students.

A Jobs Program provided part-time jobs for students, with minimum wages subsidized by the DPI. Students in this program tended to have higher prior year attendance and courses passed rates, but even when these were controlled for in regression analysis, participation in the program had positive effects on attendance and courses passed. At the same time, the course pass rates were still lower than would allow the average student to complete school in a reasonable span of time. Only half of the Jobs Program students had counseling, few were involved in alternative education, and virtually none of these students had tutoring.

Health services may have been improved somewhat in the schools as a result of a city regulation that required each school to have a health coordinator beginning in the second program year. However, the role of the DPI in facilitating health services was not clearly specified and very few health services were recorded by DPI staff. At least as significant was the survey response of DPI staff in most middle schools and high schools, that health services in the schools were very inadequate for students' needs. Illness was far the most common explanation students themselves cited for their absence from school on an evaluation survey in Year Two. Given the staff's general perception that the students have extraordinary health needs, it may not be possible to achieve the DPI's goals until substantial improvements in access to health care are made.

Security was a component of the DPI in the 10 DPP high schools. It included the most positively evaluated of all the CBO contributions, the Victims Service Agency's Project S.M.A.R.T. This project trained students to mediate conflict between students. Deans particularly had to yield some of their territory to students, and observations by evaluation staff found students responding seriously to their new responsibility. The number of suspensions based on "aggressive acts against students" was significantly reduced, especially during the first year that S.M.A.R.T. was introduced into a given school. Social learning in this project appeared to be substantially more positive than the not-so-hidden curriculum of conflict that characterized the experience of many students. Fighting was a constant theme in many students' lives in schools. School security staff were often perceived to be adding to the problem by arbitrarily ignoring the behaviors of some students and confronting others, rather than dealing with situations in a more preventative and mediating way.

Increasingly over the three years of the DPI, an initial interest in comparing "systemic" distribution of services with case management distribution of services broadened into an interest in systemic reform of the schools more generally, especially at the high school level. The "services" framework of the program, oriented more to students' needs than to the deficiencies of the schools, became increasingly inadequate to carry this larger mission of systemic change. From this point of view, the DPI could be viewed as a forerunner of the more general current shift toward school-based planning for dropout prevention.

Attendance and Courses Passed Outcomes

Middle Schools

The Year One middle school targeted students' attendance had been 77% in the prior year and declined to 73% in the program year. The Year Two targeted students' attendance declined only slightly, from 78% to 77%. Finally, the Year Three middle school students' attendance fell from 77% to 74%. In both Year Two and Year Three, attendance changes were similar for comparison samples of students who were eligible for services but not targeted in the DPI. There was, then, no progress between Year One and Year Three in arresting students' attendance declines in the middle schools.

The longitudinal analyses found further that both the Year One and the Year Two students had an additional attendance loss of about -8% the year after they were in the program. The loss was somewhat greater for students entering high school than for students continuing in middle school.

In Year Two, 49% of the targeted students improved their attendance, while in Year Three, 47% of the targeted students improved their attendance. Observing that the comparison groups were not randomly selected controls and might have been less at risk in some way that the evaluation did not discover, and noting the attendance loss in the year following the program year, the DPI in the middle schools might be seen to have checked an otherwise anticipated attendance decline in the program year, particularly in Year Two, by nearly meeting the attendance objective. The evaluation tended to appraise outcomes with reference to the changes that would be required to make a substantial difference in the long run. Yet if the Chancellor's goals are looked at as short-run objectives, approaching them, particularly the attendance goal (which seems to have been set at an appropriate level of challenge for the program), might be seen to demonstrate that the program began to impact on students. Even if so, however, this effect was dissipated in the subsequent years.

Middle school targeted students passed about one tenth of a course more in Year One compared to the same students' number of courses passed in the prior year. Year Two's targeted students gained about one fourth of a course--passing 70% of their major courses in the program year, compared with 65% of their courses in the prior year. And Year Three targeted students gained an intermediate fraction--passing 73% of their courses in the program year, compared with 70% in the prior year. Comparison and longitudinal data were not available on courses passed.

In Year Two, 59% of the students who had failed at least one course in the prior year passed a higher proportion of courses in the program year. In Year Three, 63% of those who had previously failed a course passed a higher proportion of their courses. In both of these years then, and probably in the first, the program exceeded the Chancellor's goal that at least 50% of students who had previously failed a course pass courses at a higher rate in the program year. However, by focusing just on those students with previous course failures, the goal capitalized on regression to the mean. When *all* targeted students in Year Three were considered, 37% passed more courses during the program year than they had the previous year, 32% passed fewer, and 31% stayed the same.

In all three years, the middle school program appears to have arrested a decline in courses passed that might otherwise have been expected on the basis of the attendance declines. However, the rate of passing courses that resulted was still substantially below what would be required to alter the prospect of many students dropping out at some later time in high school.

High Schools

The Year One targeted high school students' attendance had been 72% in the prior year and declined to 63% in the program year. The Year Two targeted students' attendance declined from 71% to 62%. And in Year Three, the targeted students' attendance fell from 69% to 64%. The attendance loss was somewhat lower in the third year than in the first two years of the program. Still, the resultant attendance rates were similar in all three years and put the average student at substantial risk of being discharged as a dropout. The longitudinal analyses found that both the Year One and the Year Two high school students had a further attendance loss of about -8% the year after they were in the program, the same pattern that was found for middle school students. Being targeted for services in a subsequent year did not reduce the attendance loss of students in the subsequent year, compared to the loss for students not targeted in the subsequent year, either for students who were initially targeted in the middle schools or for students initially targeted in the high schools.

In Year Two, 35% of the targeted students improved their attendance over the previous year, and in Year Three, 39% of the targeted students improved their attendance over the previous year.

In the high schools, the Year One targeted students' courses passed rate had been 44% in the prior year and declined to 35% in the program year. The Year Two targeted students' course pass rate declined from 48% to 41%, and the Year Three students' rate of passing courses declined from 47% to 43%. The loss in the rate of passing courses was slightly less in the second and again in the third years of the program. However, the resultant rate of passing courses was still, as in the middle schools, much lower than would be necessary for the average student to have a good chance of obtaining a high school diploma.

In Year Two, 43% of the targeted students who had previously failed a course improved their percent of courses passed, while in Year Three, 42% improved their percent of courses passed. When *all* targeted students were considered in Year Three, 36% had gains in percent of courses passed, 15% stayed the same, and 49% had losses in percent of courses passed.

Relationship between Services or Activities and Outcomes

Middle Schools

In both Year Two and Year Three, there was a positive correlation between attendance or courses passed and services that required a student's presence in school to be given and recorded--attendance incentive, individual guidance, group guidance, student conference, and physical examination. In both years, there was a negative correlation between the outcomes and events that were typically precipitated by a student's absence--mail, telephone, home visits, and parent conference or guidance. As noted above, enrollment in PCEN remediation or in DPP enrichment (mostly for students not eligible for PCEN) in Year Three also correlated positively with outcomes, but this reflected the selection of the students. In addition to the records of these services, monthly records of attendance were also available to the evaluation in Year Three and thus allowed various regression analyses that controlled on attendance early in the program year. Student attendance in one month was highly correlated with attendance the following month; for program students overall, neither direct nor indirect services appeared to have any impact on this pattern. (See also the discussion of attendance outreach above.)

High Schools

The evaluation examined the implementation of DPI services or activities in the high schools in Year One and Year Two, but only in Year Three was there adequate data to begin looking at their effects.

Analyzing high school DPI coordinators' checkoff of services received by students, it was found that outcomes were more favorable if students received more, rather than fewer, services. Since students who received more services tended to have had lower prior year attendance and courses passed outcomes, some of their gains may have represented regression to the mean.

Results for a given activity, for example mini-school or off-campus enrichment, varied widely from one school to another, reflecting differences in the students served, how the activity was carried out, coordination of the activity with other activities or services, and the general contexts of the schools.

In the ten DPP high schools, the Jobs Program was the one activity that was associated with an attendance gain. However, there was also a slightly less negative attendance change in favor of participants, compared to nonparticipants, in instructional enrichment, affiliation, and ongoing individual counseling.

In the three AIDP high schools, results of the different activities were much more mixed. Again, there was one area associated with an attendance gain, this time student affiliation. Students in the Jobs Program lost less attendance than students who were not in this program. The students who had group counseling had a larger loss in attendance than the relatively few students who did not have group counseling. What is particularly obvious in this last case might also apply in others, that the assignment of students to group counseling might have been a consequence as much as the cause of their losing attendance.

In an analysis of variance, the Jobs Program, affiliation, and instructional enrichment made very small but significant contributions to students' attendance in the DPP schools, after previous attendance was accounted for. Only blocked program or mini-school made even a slight contribution to attendance variance for AIDP targeted students.

In the ten DPP high schools, the number of credits students earned and whether students had gains or losses in percent of courses passed varied fairly independently of each other. Instructional enrichment, Jobs Program, and student affiliation were the basic types of activity that were most associated both with smaller losses in percent of courses passed and larger average number of credits gained. Students who were relatively less at risk were found disproportionately in these activities, while students who were relatively highly at risk on the basis of prior performance were concentrated in mini-schools or blocked programs and, to a lesser extent, in individual and group counseling. Still, enrichment, Jobs Program, and affiliation emerged as positive contributors to courses passed in a regression analysis.

In the three AIDP high schools, students both earned more credits and had better courses passed changes if they participated in four basic types of activity: mini-school or blocked program, instructional enrichment, ongoing individual counseling, and Jobs Program. However, no activities predicted courses passed after prior year courses passed was entered into a regression analysis.

Instructional enrichment included the Operation Success career education and job training program implemented by Federation Employment Guidance Service (FEGS). Students in this program in DPP schools had an average loss of attendance and a modest gain in courses passed, but earned a lower than average number of credits during the year ("average" referring here to the average for all program students). Students in career education and job training in the AIDP schools had a lower than average loss in attendance, a substantial gain in courses passed and a higher than average number of credits earned during the year.

The school with the strongest combined attendance and courses passed results, also in the AIDP, had a vocational and career-oriented curriculum for targeted students.

Effects of CBO vs. School Staffing on Services and Outcomes

CBO model middle schools tended to record more guidance services to students than did School Alone model schools. However, in Year Three it was found that middle school students who were clustered for alternative education were just as likely to receive more services than not-clustered students when they were in a CBO school as when they were in a School Alone school. This finding indicated that CBO and school staff tended to adopt similar ways of accessing students for service. CBO DPP staffs initially included a greater proportion of racial or ethnic minority personnel than did school DPP staffs, but by Year Three the proportions appeared to be similar. Outcome differences between middle school CBO and School Alone model schools were quite small in all three years and were generally accounted for by initial differences in student characteristics.

All of the high schools had at least some CBO involvement, although CBOs received a much larger proportion of the funding in some schools than in others. As in the middle schools, the CBOs in the high schools especially emphasized counseling. In both Year Two and Year Three, students who were served by a combination of school and CBO staff tended to have somewhat better attendance and courses passed outcomes than students who were served only by school staff or only by CBO staff. The schools with the strongest overall gains in student attendance and/or courses passed all involved Operation Success. Operation Success was also involved, however, in schools in which students had substantial losses in attendance or courses passed. The effectiveness of CBOs, as of virtually all DPI units, varied as a function of the students they were serving, the school context in which they operated, and their own organization, including CBO site management and staff stability or turnover.

Outcome Variations Among Individual Schools

Attendance and courses passed outcomes varied between individual schools, at both the middle school and the high school level. When quantitative data were used alone, these variations were more clearly associated with differences in the students selected for the programs in the schools than with particular services or activities in the schools. However, quantitative and qualitative data together yielded dynamic pictures of some of the schools. Three middle schools that had the most consistent attendance gains over the last two program years were forced by circumstance, as perhaps all of the schools were, to change the specific configuration of their program from one year to another, but used a combination of goal-oriented management, problem solving, and creativity to link instruction to student support services. Every high school seemed to be different, as illustrated by the two schools briefly characterized under *Alternative education* above. Equally important, the high schools ranged at different points on a developmental trajectory. The dropout prevention program in some schools appeared to be gathering strength at the end of the first three years, while in others it had already peaked or it had not progressed during this time. Strong, facilitative school leadership, first of all by the principal, was observed to be essential for effective program development.

Outcome Variations For Different Groups of Students

At both the middle school and the high school level, male and female students' attendance was similar, but males passed courses at a lower rate than females. Again, this seemed to reflect both the behavior and the interpretation of behavior associated with male and female roles, beginning even before the students entered the middle schools. Although there were variations in individual schools, this pattern was not modified by the DPI overall.

Students' attendance was lower in proportion to their years overage for grade. Overage students tended to have greater attendance losses than at-age students during the program year in the middle schools. In the high schools, students who were at age and overage for grade both had substantial attendance losses in Year One and Year Two, while in Year Three, the losses in attendance were less for at-age students.

Students had lower rates of passing courses as they were more years overage for grade. However, overage did not make a difference to the percent of change in courses passed for middle school students during the program year. In the high schools, the largest losses in courses passed were incurred by students who were at age and, at least in Year Three, four years overage for grade. The finding for students who were zero years overage seemed to reflect the difficulty of transition into high school even for students who had been relatively successful in school up until that point. Losses in courses passed were particularly great for students who were entering ninth or tenth grade from middle school, though less so in Year Three than in Year Two.

Considering both the attendance and the courses passed data, students entering high school in Year Three seem to have had somewhat lower losses than comparable students in Year Two. This suggested some progress was made for these students.

Students with greater prior absences tended to be more absent during the program year. At least in the high schools, however, students with greater prior absences tended to have lower losses, or even attendance gains, during the program year. This reflected regression toward the mean, or recovery of attendance, for those students who persisted in school despite high prior absences. Similar patterns were found for students with high and low prior year rates of courses passed.

In Year Three, the only year for which there were sufficient data to address the question, middle school students who met the then-standard criterion of Limited English Proficiency (having a score of less than 20 on the LAB test) passed courses in 1987-88 at the same rate or higher, and had substantially greater gains over 1986-87 in courses passed, than middle school students who had either marginal English proficiency (having a score between 20 and 39 on the LAB, or having taken a standardized achievement test in an alternate-language format) and than middle school students who were classified as English proficient.

LEP high school students in Year Three passed substantially more courses in 1987-88 than either marginally English proficient (MEP) or English proficient students in that year. However, while they had a smaller loss from the prior year than the marginally English proficient students, the LEP students had a greater loss compared to the English proficient students.

Attendance was not affected by Eglish proficiency at the middle school level, but in the high schools, LEP students attended school substantially more thn either marginally English proficient or English proficient students in 1987-88.

All of these findings seemed to demonstrate that eligibility for bilingual or ESL classes favored students' performance. It is possible both that the classes were more adapted to the students and that the LEP students themselves included recent immigrants who were more favorably disposed toward school. It will be important to determine how the recent change in the eligibility formula affects the performance of marginally English proficient students, who tended to have the largest losses in courses passed.

These findings applied to both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students, at both the middle-school and the high-school level. Hispanic status was judged from students' surnames, which correlated .85 with self-identified ethnic or racial status for a sample of students who were surveyed in Year Two. A more general comparison of Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in the DPP middle schools and high schools in Year Two and Year Three found that English language proficiency was associated with more differences in services received and outcomes than ethnic or racial status itself--LEP or MEP students tended to receive the fewest services in most categories. Analysis of the student survey results showed that both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students varied widely in family background, self-concept, and experience of the school environment. Still, Hispanic students had somewhat lower expectations for completing high school and post-secondary education and tended to see fewer connections between education and career. At the same time, Hispanic students perceived the school environment somewhat more positively than non-Hispanic students.

Longitudinal Findings

The evaluation examined outcomes for targeted middle school and high school students from each of the three cohorts of the DPI--Year One (1985-86), Year Two (1986-87), and Year Three (1987-88)--cumulatively from 1984-85 through the end of the 1987-88 school year.

About one fifth of the program students altogether were targeted for services in more than one year. From the standpoint of continuity of services, this proportion was very low.

About one half of the targeted students who were in a terminal grade in middle school (8th grade in a 6-7-8 school, 9th grade in a school with grades 7, 8, and 9) in Year One, and again in Year Two, matriculated the next year in a DPI high school, but less than one tenth in either year were targeted for services in the high school in the following year. These results varied for individual middle schools, reflecting the different extent to which they were in fact feeders to the DPI zoned high schools and the varying linkage or exchange of information between different middle schools and high schools.

Overall, the study found that targeted students' attendance deteriorated over time and that it is likely that at least half of the targeted students in each cohort will have been discharged as a dropout three years after their entry into high school. This was already the result for the First Cohort of high school students as of the end of 1987-88, and the attendance and discharge patterns for the later high school cohorts and the attendance patterns for the middle school cohorts suggested that outcomes for these students would be similar.

Almost two thirds (63%) of the First Cohort middle school ninth grade students were still in school or in a few cases had obtained a diploma three years later, i. e., at the conclusion of the 1987-88 school year. Of course, because they were even younger, all other groups of targeted middle school students, in lower grades and/or in later cohorts, were still in school at even higher rates at this time. These results fulfilled the Chancellor's objective that 50% or more of students in the 9th grade or below still be in school three years later. However, the attendance trends found for the cohorts suggested that the eventual school completion rates would be as low for these students as they were turning out to be for the high school students.

By the end of 1987-88, 15% of the First Cohort of targeted high school students had graduated from high school or received a GED and another 12% were still in school or were enrolled in a GED program. At the same time, 51% had been discharged as dropouts. (Another 10% were discharged not as dropouts and data were missing for 12%.) The dropout discharges began in the program year at a rate of 16%, proceeded at a higher rate in the following year, 21%, and then occurred at close to the initial rate in the second year after the program, 14%. A similar pattern seems to be developing for the Second and the Third Cohorts. Thus the school completion rate that is anticipated for all three of the high school cohorts is very low.

Although a low proportion of the targeted students were discharged into GED programs, almost as many targeted high school students received a GED (5%) as received a high school diploma (7%) in the first three years of the DPI. It appeared that the GED route had so far been more efficient than the regular school route for highly at-risk students to complete their education at the secondary level.

Program Cost

A great deal of money was spent in the DPI. Middle school DPI expenditures in the schools came to a total of $11,456,626 in the three years between 1985-86 and 1987-88 and high school expenditures totaled $23,502,916 during these three years. These figures do not include fringe benefits for DPI Board of Education personnel in the schools, which can be estimated to have cost over $3 million during this period, or administration of the program by the central Board of Education, which cost at least another $3 million. (The figures above do include CBO fringe benefits.) Altogether, then, the DPI cost over $40 million during Years One, Two, and Three. Simultaneously, a considerably larger sum was being spent in the AIDP (outside of the three high schools included in the DPI), with basically similar student outcomes, judging from the Board of Education's own evaluations of the AIDP.

Including actual figures or estimates for fringe benefits, CBO costs accounted for about 30% of the middle school expenditures and about 50% of the high school expenditures. The CBOs spent a lower percent of the funds allocated to them in Year One than the schools themselves spent, but by Year Three they were spending a higher proportion of their allocated funds. This reflected partly the fact that Board of Education payment and reimbursement processes were expedited more for the CBOs than for the schools themselves.

Overall, school- and district-level DPI expenditures per pupil (including CBO fringe benefits, but excluding Board of Education fringe benefits) in the middle schools averaged $807 per pupil in Year One, $974 per pupil in Year Two, and $872 per pupil in Year Three. Even taking fringe benefits into account, expenditures per pupil were substantially higher in the CBO model schools than in the School Alone (originally "Project Connect") schools that employed only Board of Education staff. This especially reflected the fact that in Year Two and Year Three, fewer students were targeted in most of the CBO schools than in the School Alone schools on account of ambiguity about how many students school staff themselves were expected to serve in the CBO schools in addition to the students served by CBO staff.

In the high schools, the average cost of the program per pupil (again including CBO fringe benefits, but excluding Board of Education fringe benefits) was $1090 in Year One, $1739 in Year Two, and $1577 in Year Three. Costs per pupil in the high schools were *lower* in the "modified CBO" and AIDP schools that contracted with FEGS than in the "modified systemic" schools that employed other CBOs but relied mainly on school personnel. Within all three models, however, per pupil costs were highest in schools where CBOs served substantially fewer students than they had contracted to serve.

Although it was technically feasible to do a cost-benefit analysis, only one such analysis was carried out, on the grounds that cost-benefit analysis is invalid where gains have not been realized or are inadequately specified.

Without discounting the importance of the DPI's falling far short of its ultimate goals, the evaluation has argued that the DPI should also be viewed as having implemented processes of school improvement that might benefit future cohorts of students if the Board of Education builds upon what has been learned in the dropout prevention effort so far.

Recommendations

Over the course of several years, the evaluation has made many recommendations. The Board of Education has responded positively to a number of the recommendations in at least some measure. These responses have included the facilitation of the contracting process for CBOs, the inclusion of not-targeted students in the DPI incentives program, facilitating re-entry for students returning to the middle schools from long absences, and increasing alternative education options in the high school programs. As summarized earlier, the Board's attempt to increase school and district control over the middle school DPI program in Year Three was defeated by the New York State Assembly's late and highly constraining specification of how alternative education funds could be spent.

The greatest response to the evaluation occurred in the planning for 1989-90, in effect Year Five of the DPI, by which time the Board of Education's own evaluations of the program were reinforcing the Teachers College assessment, especially at the high school level. The Board's Request for Proposals for 1989-90 emphasized collaboration between the dropout prevention program and ongoing buildingwide activities, innovative strategies such as flexible scheduling and creative instructional programming, programs to integrate the target population with other students from the same school, multicultural approaches, parent involvement, and staff development, as well as redoubled efforts related to the specific program components. The evaluation does not know to what extent these recommendations have been translated into new practices in the schools.

Certain of the evaluation's recommendations have called for major augmentation of the schools' resources through alliances with employers in both the private and the public sectors. Part-time employment and mentoring programs need to be greatly expanded and depend upon this collaboration. The development of theme-related and experiential curriculum might be fostered through these alliances at a school and district level. The sheer ratio of adults to children and youths is far too low in the city's classrooms and needs to be altered by restructuring the school experience.

The use of older students, even or perhaps especially students who are themselves at risk of dropping out, as mentors and tutors for younger students, has been found to contribute positively to the school performance of both the giving and the receiving students and would itself change the age equation in the schools. The success of peer mediation for conflict resolution in the schools argues for giving more responsibility for the learning environment to students.

Recommendations that there be much closer articulation between the middle schools and the high schools, that dropout prevention begin in the early grades, and that there be strong followthrough for students throughout their school careers, may be reflected in the current Corridor School planning.

It has become increasingly apparent that even these more far-reaching and comprehensive efforts might fall short of changing the beliefs and practices in the schools that are most intractably linked with students' attendance and achievement patterns. A reason for thinking this is that the DPI has held schools and CBOs accountable much more for the services and activities they conduct and document than for the outcomes that these activities are meant to produce. To improve students' attendance and achievement and reduce dropping out, it is necessary that these very goals themselves govern the process of school-based planning. "Keep your eye on the ball" is a common sense way of saying what studies of individual and organizational behavior confirm, that goals are essential for regulating complex programs and actions. The evaluation has translated this into recommendations that a dropout prevention program have both short-term and long-term objectives. The short-term goals need to be both feasible and challenging. The process of establishing even these goals will require experimentation in the schools. To accomplish this, the schools need information systems to profile data on students and programs. These need to be developed in each school, or built upon the base that already exists in some schools. User-friendly computer programs need to be developed that give each school a capacity to generate its own data for the questions asked in that school and at the same time allow data to be merged at district, city, and state levels. The Board of Education should furnish sufficient computer equipment, programs, and training for these purposes to each school, and should facilitate the exchange of information between schools.

The profiles for students and activities that the evaluation has discovered can themselves help to redefine the problem as they are re-discovered in each school that confronts its data directly. The goal of dropout prevention then becomes a goal to modify sex stereotyped behavior in the schools, to increase the courses passed rate for older students, to have students choose schools where they see a prospect for their success, and so on. One of the evaluation's repeated recommendations at the middle school level was that the Board of Education *not* require DPI staff to complete the Monthly Summary of Service Report (which in fact was a daily summary of services for each student) for every month of the school year. The reason was not that the data were unimportant, but that much valuable time was commandeered for recording data that staff were often not invested in and which were subsequently used more to monitor levels of services than to profile outcomes. The MSSR also recorded daily attendance and, like many other elements of the DPI, might turn out to have been a major step in the right direction. What is needed is an adaptation of data generating processes to the goals and means of intervention that schools themselves determine, within the framework of goals for the city and the state.

Finally, there is a limit to how much dropout prevention can be accomplished through technical management of information. It is essential that there be an adult who is in touch with each student and to whom others can refer for communication with and about the student. Houses, subschools or mini-schools, and advisory and mentoring systems can facilitate this process provided that they do not isolate and track students at risk. It is only through personal contact that students can experience the care that may be the bottom line of dropout prevention.

The evaluation's recommendations are largely conjectural. School-based planning teams, with major support from the Board of Education, may themselves be in the best position to test these recommendations in their own operating contexts.

EVALUATION OF THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

1985-86 THROUGH 1987-88

FINAL LONGITUDINAL REPORT

VOLUME TWO

APPENDICES

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Volume Two

Appendices

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Appendix B. 1986-87 Interim Report Executive Summary.

Appendix C. 1986-87 Final Report, Part One: Middle Schools Summary of Findings and Recommendations.

Appendix D. 1986-87 Final Report, Part Two: High Schools Summary of Findings and Recommendations.

Appendix E. 1987-88 Final Report, Part One: Middle Schools Executive Summary.

Appendix F. Final Report on the High Schools for Year Three, 1987-88 Executive Summary and Detailed Summary.

APPENDIX A

EVALUATION OF THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

FINAL REPORT FOR YEAR ONE

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Teachers College Dropout Prevention Program Evaluation

1985-86 Final Report

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The New York City Board of Education's Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) was implemented in 10 high schools and 29 middle schools in 1985-86. The Teachers College evaluation includes these schools and three high schools administered by the Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention (AIDP) program.

Two models of service delivery were implemented in the middle schools, one that employed Board of Education personnel only (Project Connect), and another that employed personnel from both the Board of Education and community based organizations (CBO). In the high schools, four models were involved: a systemic model, which attempted to serve at-risk students by strengthening a school generally; a case-management model, which targeted services directly to selected at-risk students; a modified systemic model, and a modified case-management model, these mixing the two approaches in different proportions.

This summary addresses first implementation in the middle schools and high schools, and next individual, school, and model level student characteristics and outcomes. It should be clearly understood that because this is a report on findings from the first, implementation year of a three-year project, it would be utterly inappropriate to come to definitive conclusions at this time about the potential effectiveness of the programs being evaluated.

Middle School Implementation

1. The middle-school Dropout Prevention Program was implemented in 1985-86 in 14 CBO schools, and in 15 Project Connect schools. Monitoring and support functions were carried out by the Office of Student Progress.

2. The DPP program components were implemented at different rates. Facilitation was implemented earliest in the year, and in 28 schools by the end of the year, followed by attendance outreach (29 schools), guidance and counseling (28 schools), health (12 schools), alternative education (21 schools), and school linkage (15 schools).

3. Recorded attendance outreach services to targeted students--mail, telephone calls, home visits, and conferences with parents--totaled more than 30,000 in all the middle schools combined. Recorded guidance and counseling services totaled more than 20,000 individual and group sessions. About 20,000

attendance outreach services were recorded by the 15 Project Connect schools, and about 10,000 by the 14 CBO schools. Approximately 10,000 guidance and counseling sessions were recorded by both the PC and the CBO schools.

4. Some of the community based organizations received contracts to work in the DPP schools several months after the school year began. This substantially affected the timing and extent of implementation of services in the CBO schools. Even after contracting, CBOs had to bankroll their expenditures until reimbursements were processed. The Board of Education has since appointed personnel to expedite contracting, but there still appear to be bureaucratic obstacles to timely implementation.

Recommendation: The Board of Education should interpret its role as one of facilitating the collaboration of community based organizations with the schools, rather than simply monitoring work contracted out to an alien organization.

5. Facilitation was actually undertaken both by facilitators and by CBO site supervisors. The effectiveness of a facilitator was dependent not only on the facilitator's effort, abilities, and other commitments in the school, but on the proactive support of the principal: in supervising the facilitator, explaining the program to staff, and promoting teachers' involvement with the program. This was the more true if a community based organization was involved in the program. The roles of the facilitator and the CBO site supervisor overlapped to some degree, yet each was answerable to a different organization. The principal sometimes fostered their collaboration.

More generally, in many schools the communication between school and CBO personnel involved in the DPP programs was very strained. Conflict occurred particularly around who was responsible for attendance monitoring and the scheduling or releasing of students for activity during the school day.

Recommendation: Principals themselves need to be communicated with by community school district and Office of Student Progress personnel, in meetings other than those focused on monitoring reports, to involve them in setting goals and solving problems in the Dropout Prevention Program. Principals should have regular meetings with facilitators, and, where relevant, CBO site supervisors, to help resolve issues and to formulate agendas for meetings of the school faculty and the project Pupil Personnel Committee.

6. Documented attendance services varied greatly from one school to another, though even in CBO schools some attendance outreach was carried out by the facilitator's staff before the CBO came on board. Home visits were singled out by school faculty as particularly valuable, but other tasks often competed with them for time. Obtaining daily attendance data from teachers was difficult in some schools, whereas in others it was facilitated by special systems.

Recommendation: Provide microcomputer capacity to all schools, to generate daily attendance lists and sublists with recent attendance history, phone numbers, etc. Make time available for home visiting.

7. Trips were valued by staff for the educational and developmental opportunities they afforded students, but these and other material incentives occasioned a lot of envy from students who were not in the program. Criteria for the award of incentives were not clearly understood in a number of schools.

Recommendation: Include non-targeted students on trips, and contribute DPP money for prizes to a school fund that will distribute educational prizes and certificates in a way that promotes the program's goals on a schoolwide basis.

8. Maintaining the extensive service records required by the Office of Student Progress was universally perceived as taking time away from services to students. Yet the potential of the records for providing project staff and the Pupil Personnel Committee with an overview of how services are being distributed to students with different attendance patterns is particularly evident from the revised forms for 1986-87.

Recommendation: Require the OSP monthly summary of service during alternate months of the school year, beginning in October, and encourage Pupil Personnel Committees to use the reports internally for monitoring and planning services in the schools.

9. Guidance and counseling services in one form or another were provided widely to DPP targeted students. Relatively informal counseling services probably outnumbered formal ones. In both Project Connect and CBO schools, students' access to the services of a professional who was officially qualified to give guidance or counseling varied greatly. Several of the CBOs built their program around counseling. However, the sharing of information between school and CBO staff was often problematic.

Recommendation: Targeted students' access to a guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker or SAPIS worker, as appropriate, should be established at the beginning of each year and then should be reviewed at intervals by the Pupil Personnel Committee. The Bureau of Child Guidance might be called upon to help a given school to solve problems, where necessary.

10. The health role of the DPP was basically to facilitate targeted students' utilization of the health services offered by the schools, but these services were themselves quite inadequate in some schools while strong in others. The biggest problem that the DPP staff can themselves help with is getting parents' permissions for health services and following up on whether students and their families are acting on referrals.

Recommendation: As health and attendance are so closely linked, health inquiries, including questions about permissions and referrals, might be made a regular part of the attendance outreach.

11. School linkage was weakly implemented in most of the schools. Only one of the zoned local high schools was really aggressive about recruiting DPP students, and middle school DPP staff had generally limited access to high schools outside their zones. A Parents Association in one school, and a CBO in one district, demonstrated that a third party may be effective in bridging the gap between the two systems of the middle schools and the high schools.

At least as important as the question of selecting a high school is the problem of transition to high school. This aspect of linkage seems to have received even less attention during the first year of implementation.

Recommendation: The Division of High Schools should take the lead in facilitating DPP students' access to high schools for selection and preparation for transition. The Chancellor's December 19, 1986 addendum to Special Circular No. 25 does address this need, but more time and resources will be required than the first due date for submission of plans recognizes.

Within the middle schools, with assistance at the district level, DPP staff should work with regular school staff to develop activities that anticipate transition to high school. There is a need to designate and fund someone within the school or CBO to be specifically responsible for linkage activities.

12. The type and level of alternative educational services provided in the DPP programs varied considerably. Some career education classes utilized small group processes, others used traditional classroom forms. Enterprise activities were alternately engaging and stereotyped. Some programs created appealing combinations of academic and recreational activities for after school, but many had problems recruiting teachers and attracting students after school.

A problem that is best seen in relation to alternative educational services is the question of students' re-entry to the classroom after a sustained absence, or indeed after only a few days. This presented serious difficulties for teachers as well as for the students, leading to the observation in a number of schools that teachers did not know how best to handle students who were brought back.

Recommendation: Workshops should be held next summer for DPP staff to exchange career education approaches and coordinate them with the framework OSP has promulgated.

For after-school activities, budget should be used in each school for a workshop or committee involving school faculty along with DPP/CBO staff, to plan activities that are both sound academically and attractive to staff and students. This same committee should address the re-entry question, making recommendations to teachers and DPP staff on how to help students and teachers re-connect academically. Any viable solution will probably entail some degree of individualized instruction, which DPP homework-help or other arrangements could facilitate. However, it is recognized that for many schools, individualized instruction would exceed present capacities, and that support would need to be forthcoming from community school districts or OSP.

High School Implementation

13. The Dropout Prevention Program was implemented in 10 high schools, and supported by the office of the Assistant Superintendent for Dropout Prevention. Three high schools with programs funded and administered by the AIDP have been included in the evaluation for comparison. Facilitation was implemented earliest in the year, in 13 schools altogether by the end of the year, followed by attendance outreach (13 schools), guidance and counseling (13 schools), security (10 schools), alternative education (13 schools), school linkage (9 schools), and health (8 schools).

Unexpectedly, from the standpoint of the design, all 13 of the high schools in the evaluation worked with at least one CBO. As with the middle schools, late contracting and reimbursements resulted in startup delays, especially for programs that were more dependent on CBOs.

Recommendation: As long as there is an experimental effort to find out what contribution CBOs can make to schools, the Board of Education, again, needs to play an enabling role.

14. Overall, the relationship between the schools and the CBOs was more positive at the high school level than at the middle school level, reflecting in part the fact that high schools had a say in the selection of the CBOs working with them. Still, serious issues of coordination remained in many of the schools.

Recommendation: A current project of the Office of the Assistant Superintendent for Dropout Prevention to facilitate the relationship of the schools with the CBOs should be sustained and, if necessary, expanded.

15. More generally, the policy of giving the high schools more control over program than was given to the middle schools seems to have elicited more ownership of the DPP effort by the high school principals. The high school coordinators or facilitators as well received a lot of support from the DPP and AIDP central offices, which contributed to their initiative.

Recommendation: As implied in several of the recommendations for middle school implementation, give more control over program, and concomitant responsibility, to middle school principals and DPP staffs.

16. While some schools took a more systemic approach, still all schools used case management to some extent. Therefore, the sheer contrast of schools in one or another model will not answer questions about the relative effectiveness of case management vs. systemic strategies.

Recommendation: The Teachers College stratified sampling plan, together with the service logs at three times during the year, will be able to answer some general questions about the strategies. However, in each school the project staff should review the services being received by targeted students. CBO service logs and/or the Teachers College log should be utilized for this purpose. As some schools are exploring, a microcomputer could be adapted to internal monitoring of the distribution of services to students.

17. In 1985-86, there was ambiguity about the function of listing students for services in the high school programs. The high schools differed tremendously in how many students they listed. Systemic schools listed students to justify funding, but not necessarily to target services. The expectation in 1986-87 that all schools will make up a list of at least 100 students for targeted services clarifies the matter somewhat.

Whether the lists should contain long-term absentees was and continues to be an issue. Should the programs be saving LTAs? DPP and the CBOs were helpful in finding LTAs and/or referring them to appropriate educational services, but many LTAs were not found and this was seen as a waste of time.

Recommendation: As the issues here overlap with those in #13 above, so does the recommendation. The results of the evaluation and monitoring internally within the school should both be used to clarify the list questions.

18. Attendance outreach tended to be emphasized more by school personnel than by CBO personnel in the DPP high schools. Just how strongly it was implemented in the schools was a function of both the drive of the school for increased attendance and the technical training of the personnel.

The success of the attendance outreach also seemed to aided by students' being able to identify with the ethnicity, language, or social experience of DPP staff. Though this was remarked on at both the middle and the high school levels, it may have been more true in the more impersonal or adult context of the high school. At both the middle and the high school levels, family workers or family assistants hired by the Board of Education, and CBO staff more generally, were more likely to represent the nonwhite groups that constitute the majority of students in the DPP programs.

Recommendation: Racial/ethnic and language relatedness to students, technical skill, and administrative drive need to be integrated, if they are not already, to realize the full potential of a school's attendance outreach.

19. The DPP program increased counseling resources in all of the high schools. The CBOs particularly tended to organize their programs around counseling, encompassing a larger range of services than those which school guidance counselors ordinarily have the time or resources to provide. A major issue in some of the schools was coordination or overlap of CBO and regular services.

Recommendation: The coordination of services, including criteria and procedures for referral, needs to be reviewed in each school by the Pupil Personnel Committee.

20. Although two schools were exceptions, the high school personnel were generally dissatisfied with school level linkages, and tended to blame the middle schools for the problem. The middle schools, of course, were found to blame the high schools.

Recommendation: Again, the Division of High Schools should take the lead in facilitating DPP students' access to high schools. Familiarization with high school, and preparation for its demands, not just the selection of a particular high school, should be a high priority for linkage. This will probably entail cooperation between the borough superintendents and the community school districts, but the problem crosses borough lines.

21. Health was widely regarded as one of the weakest components of the DPP effort. Confusion about the role of DPP personnel and inadequate health resources were frequently cited.

Recommendation: The clearest role for DPP personnel is facilitation of students' permission, referrals, and follow-up for health services. As at the middle-school level, this might be closely tied to attendance outreach services. The health resources of the schools need to be reviewed by the Bureau of Health, and the cooperation of health, school, and CBO personnel may need to be facilitated at an administrative level by the Office of the Mayor. More funding may be needed to acomplish health goals.

22. DPP funded educational alternatives took many forms in the high schools, including curriculum development and teacher training for the regular instructional program, course enrichment activities, reorganization of students and staff into clusters or minischools, reduction of class size, special tutoring programs, transitional programs, job skills development, after-school activities, and p.m. schools. There were both substantive and structural aspects to many of these interventions.

Recommendation: These interventions are a key to answering the question, how will students' opportunities to succeed in school be enhanced once they have received other services to encourage them to return and/or to attend classes and program activities? The average rate of targeted students' passing courses in 1985-86 was not high enough to lead to graduation within a reasonable span of years. It might be that, whatever the level of the DPP investment in educational alternatives in a given school, it needs to be increased. In every school, regular academic courses and educational alternatives alike need to be reviewed from the standpoint of how they contribute to students' opportunities to complete their high school education.

23. The DPP high schools have taken various measures to strengthen school security. These include the installation of an automated entry system, hiring and equipping extra security personnel, and, in a few schools, training guards and students in mediation and conflict resolution techniques. In several schools, at least, security was recognized as linked to discipline and the students' images or perceptions of the climate of the school.

Recommendation: The image and climate of the school should continue to be a matter of active concern to the leadership of virtually every school, at both the middle and the high school level.

Middle School Student Characteristics and Outcomes

24. A total of 4336 students were identified as middle school program participants. More than 93% of these were targeted in the fall of 1985. About 95% remained on the target list until the end of the 1985-86 school year. Almost one-half of the targeted group were eighth graders, about one-third were seventh graders, and about one-fifth were ninth graders. Less than one-half of one percent were either sixth or tenth graders.

25. Middle school students targeted for services appeared to be less at risk than targeted high school students, though this partly reflects the fact that attendance and achievement are generally higher in middle schools than in high schools. About one-fifth were absent less than 20 days in the 1984-85 school year, one-half of the students were absent 20 to 39 days in that year, and about one-third had been absent 40 or more days in the 1984-85 school year. Most students were passing more courses than they were failing at the time of program entry. About one-quarter of the middle school target group were failing three or more courses in 1984-85, but over 40% were failing one or no course at that time.

26. Most targeted middle school students were reported to be receiving dropout prevention services, and many of the target group were exposed to several types of service. Over 90% of the target group was reported as having received attendance outreach,

and over 80% as receiving guidance and counseling services. About three-quarters received attendance incentives, and about one-half career education and one-half health services. Nearly 40% were exposed to extended day programs. The lowest level of service delivery was for linkage programs, in which only about one-quarter of the students were reported to have participated.

27. Targeted students in some middle schools were more at risk than the targeted students in other middle schools. Some schools had target populations that averaged 25 days absent prior to program entry, while others had target populations averaging more than 40 days absent before entering the program. The variation in course performance was even larger, with students in some schools passing less than half of their courses prior to the program, on average, while students in other schools had passed more than 80% of their classes during that period.

28. The attendance of targeted middle school students fell about four percent during the program period. There is no equivalent control group with which to compare this change, but other data suggest that students at similar levels of risk in the same grades receiving no services would show declines in attendance at least as large.

29. Overall, targeted middle school students passed about 1.5% more of their courses during the program period than before. On average, the students are still highly at risk, but the data suggest that the program may have arrested the deterioration of grades that might have been expected without intervention.

30. There were sizable differences across schools in the changes observed in attendance, the proportion of subjects passed, and achievement. These differences appear to be largely artifactual, due to the differing levels of initial risk of the target groups across middle schools. Differences between the Project Connect and CBO models were generally quite small.

31. Targeted students' access to services varied somewhat by risk level. In general, the students least likely to receive services were the ones most at risk, according to prior attendance rates and the number of subjects failed prior to program entry. Those least at risk were most likely to receive services. The relationship between access to services and prior level of risk varied across services, and was frequently nonlinear.

32. There is some evidence that exposure to services had positive effects on student outcomes. A multivariate analysis, controlling for initial attendance, indicates that students receiving linkage and incentive services have slightly higher gains in attendance than students not receiving those services. The gains are not large, however, and it is not clear that these services in themselves would have caused a change in attendance. Better measures of the actual services delivered to students available in the 1986-87 school year will help unravel the

possible effects of dropout prevention services on student outcomes.

High School Student Characteristics and Outcomes

33. A total of 6068 students were identified as high school program participants. Nearly 90% of these were listed for the program in the fall of 1985, and more than 95% remained on the lists until the end of the 1985-86 school year. Over half of the targeted group were ninth graders in 1985-86, about one-third were tenth graders, about one-tenth were eleventh graders, and a very small percent were twelfth graders.

34. Overall, the students targeted for the program were highly at risk. Almost one-quarter had been absent more than 80 days in the 1984-85 school year, and more than three-fifths were absent more than 40 days in that year. More than half of the targeted students had failed 5 or more courses during 1984-85, and more than 90% had failed at least two courses. More than 60% of the targeted students were over age for their grade. More than 60% were reading two or more years behind grade level.

Board of Education statistics showed that less than 10% of the targeted students had limited English proficiency, though student responses to the Teachers College survey indicated that a language other than English was spoken in a higher proportion of the homes of that sample.

35. Most students were eligible for the Dropout Prevention Program on more than one criterion, i. e., most students were multiply at risk.

36. Targeted students in some schools were substantially more at risk than in other schools. The schools differed in the level of targeted students' prior attendance, the level of courses failed the prior year, and so on. This reflected the exercise of different judgments about the selection of students, as well as the different demographics of the schools. At the same time, no school served students who were consistently better off than the targeted students in the other schools.

37. Between 1984-85 and 1985-86, there was a drop of attendance of 9.1% for the targeted high school students overall. The attendance of targeted nighth grade students declined by 10.3%, and among tenth through twelfth graders it declined by 7.7%. It has not yet been possible to identify a group of similarly at-risk students not in the Dropout Prevention Program or AIDP, but other data suggest that for such a population attendance could be expected to decrease by at least the amounts found here.

38. Overall, targeted students passed 4.8% fewer courses during the dropout prevention program than before entering it. There was a substantial difference across grade level, as ninth grade

consistent with information that was obtained from staff interviews and reports.

45. Targeted students in both the middle schools and the high schools reported close and supportive relationships with their families. Targeted high school students were much more likely than non-targeted students to report living with only one parent.

46. There were no apparent differences between the different models in outcome variables--amount of voluntary absenteeism, school disruption, fighting, alienation--which might be affected by the programs. One assumes this is because the programs are just beginning, and because a one-time survey cannot easily identify improvements over the preceding year.

47. Targeted students generally did not participate in school sports teams or clubs compared to students in other cities. This suggests that there are fewer opportunities to participate in these activities in New York City schools.

48. The targeted students (those who were in the schools at this time of the year) reported generally positive feelings about their teachers and their schools.

Middle School Program Costs

49. Total allocations for the first year middle school program were $4,450,000. Expenditures totalled $3,493,867. The CBO portion of this total was $1,082,287, while the school-based portion was $2,411,580.

50. Districts using CBOs spent approximately two-thirds of allocated funds, primarily due to late CBO startups.

High School Program Costs

51. In spring 1985, the high school DPP program provided pilot start-up funds (averaging 1.5 units per school). These resources were used for coordination, para-professional assistance for identifying students, and start-ups with OTPS. This funding, along with programmatic support from central DPP and the provision of school persons' involvement in program planning, greatly helped the start-up process.

52. The high school program in 13 schools cost approximately $7,522,000. About half of this amount went to the CBOs, and half to the schools. Of the program components, alternative educational programs received the most funding (approximately $2,730,000). Guidance and counseling received the next largest amount (about $1,994,000). Very little funding was made directly available for DPP health services, although varying resources were otherwise available to the schools. Similarly, school level linkages were funded at a low level (approximately $41,000). Funding for school security totalled approximately $351,000, with

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participants passed 8.9% fewer courses, while tenth through twelfth graders passed the same number as before entering the program. These statistics may be even better than one would expect for the population without intervention. However, the average student in the program passed just two courses out of every six in 1985-86. At that rate, there is no way that the average student would accumulate enough credits to graduate from high school.

39. For most comparisons, student characteristics were unrelated to the apparent effect of program participation. That is, whether students were over age, behind in reading, male or female, or had limited English proficiency, did not make a significant difference to attendance or courses passed and failed.

40. Prior attendance and prior courses passed or failed did predict current attendance and current courses passed or failed. The students who were absent least in 1984-85 tended to be the ones whose absences increased the most in 1985-86, and those who had been absent most were the ones whose absences increased the least. Whereas targeted students who were absent less than 20 days in 1984-85 had the steepest decline in 1985-86 attendance, those who were absent 100 or more days in 1984-85 actually increased their 1985-86 attendance. A similar pattern emerged for courses passed or failed. These results clearly indicate a regression to the mean, that is, the students' attendance and grades tended to move toward the average for the sample between the one year and the next. Only a very powerful specification of program variables will be able to separate program effects from such a strong regression effect.

41. There were substantial differences among schools in attendance changes between 1984-85 and 1985-86 and in course credit changes between these years. Likewise, there were differences among models in these changes. These differences, however, were closely related to the differences in students who were targeted for these schools.

42. Data on services delivered to students in the different schools or models in 1985-86 are not available in a form that allows for a calculation of the impact of services on student outcomes. Data are being collected in 1986-87 to perform this analysis.

Teachers College Survey Findings

43. As Teachers College had predicted, a low response rate was obtained to a survey administered in May and June, 1986. In the middle schools, 36% of the targeted students responded. In the high schools, the survey was completed by 42% of all the eligible students, but only 12% of the DPP targeted students.

44. At both the middle-school and the high-school levels, the students' responses to questions about services were basically

an additional $602,000 allocated for an automated attendance/entry system in the 10 DPP high schools. (Security continues to be a major concern in these schools, and the flexibility to try new approaches, including the use of conflict mediation services, is intended to produce reductions in crime and disruption.)

53. The provision of a base amount of funding for DPP schools (usually $150,000 but increased in some cases) gave schools the flexibility to purchase staff time and additional supplies and equipment. This helped schools avoid bureaucratic budgetary constraints and be more responsive to student and staff needs.

APPENDIX B

EVALUATION OF THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

INTERIM REPORT FOR YEAR TWO

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Teachers College Dropout Prevention Initiative Evaluation

1986-87 Interim Report

Executive Summary

A fundamental question for the evaluators of any educational intervention is whether the program that is intended to impact on students has been implemented. During the 1986-87 school year, Year Two of the Dropout Prevention Initiative, staff from the Teachers College DPI Evaluation Project regularly visited all 29 middle schools and 13 high schools involved in the Initiative. The middle schools included fifteen that make up Project Connect, in which the intervention has been carried out entirely by Board of Education (BOE) staff, eleven in which services have been provided by community-based organizations (CBOs) in coordination with BOE staff, and three in a district where the CBO contract was canceled. Three of the high school sites comprised a pure CBO model using case management services, four represented a modified CBO model, three made up a systemic model using school-wide improvements, and another three comprised a modified systemic model. As it has turned out in the high schools, there is at least some CBO involvement in all of the schools, and some targeting of individual students for services in all of the schools, so that the original model distinctions are no longer as accurate as new ones that the evaluation will attempt to define in Year Three.

In addition to conducting observations and interviews in the schools, the evaluation staff scrutinized various monitoring documents produced by the Office of Student Progress and the Office of Funded Programs. Staff carried out a systematic implementation analysis, which entailed taking inventory of the DPI activities at the program sites, applying rating scales to the qualitative data that the evaluators had obtained on these activities, and analyzing contextual variables. In addition, the evaluators have performed a preliminary analysis of Monthly Summary of Service Reports submitted for the middle schools in November and February, and a preliminary analysis of data on targeted students who were discharged as dropouts in 1985-86, the first year of the DPI.

Implementation of Program Components and Activities

By May, 1987, the implementation of the Dropout Prevention Initiative was found to have reached a stage of routine activity for most of the components at most of the sites, at both the middle school and high school level -- "routine" meaning that activity occurred on a regular basis, procedures were set, and staff knew their roles, but also, particularly in the middle schools, that few major changes were being implemented. This is a substantial development beyond the first year of the DPI, when more activities were in start-up and early trial stages, and seems appropriate for the second year of a complex innovation. At the same time, relatively few components were being scrutinized within schools for refinement or for larger, more general changes, except toward the end of the year in the middle schools and during the summer in the high schools, when major changes initiated centrally at the Board of Education were being planned.

There were various differences among the program sites in the extent and quality of the services offered; these differences may lend themselves to discovering the more precise characteristics of services and of service givers that are associated with student outcomes. Particularly at the high school level, there was much uncertainty about which students the DPI was serving or indeed was meant to serve; this confusion went beyond the issue involved in case-management vs. systemic strategies. Overall, however, it can be concluded that the Initiative was being carried out as intended, and thus that the stage is set to find out how the services affect students, specifically how they influence dropping out. Analysis of the effects of the programs on student outcomes in the second year can be expected to provide valid formative feedback to the Initiative, but should not be regarded as summative evaluation. This analysis will be reported beginning with the Teachers College Final Report for Year Two, in December, 1987.

In both middle and high school programs, facilitation occurred daily from the beginning of the school year. While the two middle school models were roughly comparable in number and frequency of meetings held, Project Connect facilitators appeared to do more staff supervision and program documentation than did facilitators in the CBO schools. In the high schools, pure CBO model programs showed the fewest facilitation activities. Both of these last observations may reflect the fact that CBO site supervisors themselves carried out many facilitating activities.

As part of attendance outreach, all middle school programs conducted home visits, generally on a daily or weekly basis. Several schools instituted "positive home visits." Phone calls were more prevalent in the Project Connect than the CBO-based programs. Twelve of the thirteen high school programs utilized phone calls; twelve also made home visits, and eleven used attendance incentives.

At the middle school level, nine of the fifteen Project Connect programs offered individual guidance on a daily basis, while all but one of the CBO-based programs offered individual guidance daily. Seven of the Project Connect and all CBO-based programs provided group counseling services. All thirteen high schools offered individual guidance as part of their dropout prevention programs; group guidance occurred in all but one school. The range of guidance services was much narrower in the pure systemic schools than in the modified systemic and the pure and modified CBO high school programs. Many of the additional guidance services were provided by the CBOs.

The health service component was not implemented in five Project Connect and three CBO-based middle school programs. In eleven middle schools, DPP assisted in maintaining and reviewing health records, the activity cited most often. Schools in the CBO-based model tended to offer a wider range of health services. At the high school level, the modified systemic model offered the widest range of services. Health activities varied widely among high schools. Only four of the listed activities were provided in more than three of the thirteen high schools: screening in eight schools, health fairs and individual health education in five, and referrals in four.

A greater variety of linkage activities was implemented in the high schools in 1986-87 than during the previous year. However, individual middle schools reported less variation in what they participated in. Most middle schools identified only one type of linkage activity. All Project Connect schools had tours or orientations at high schools, as did eleven CBO-based schools.

Every school in the Dropout Prevention Initiative had activities in the alternative education program component, although the number and character of these activities varied greatly. In middle schools, career education was by far the predominant activity, offered by twelve of fifteen Project Connect schools and eight of fourteen CBO schools. The Office of Student Progress introduced a new career education curriculum in 1986-87, but questions continued to be raised in the schools about the ideal career education for DPI students. (The career education curriculum appears to have been withdrawn for Year Three.) Ten Project Connect schools provided an enterprise program; ten CBO-based schools reported recreational activities. Alternative education activities in the high schools ranged on a continuum, from activities affecting a student's entire academic program (e.g., a block-scheduled transitional class) to one-day cultural enrichment or recreational activities. Three activities were common to all four high school models: transitional programs, job skills training, and before- or after-school clubs. The extent of alternative education activities was substantially increased in the modified CBO high schools, and stayed at essentially the same levels as Year One in the high schools of the other models.

Security was included as a program component only in the ten DPP high schools. Five had crisis intervention or conflict mediation. Two schools used program funds for extra security personnel. Six schools reported using their NCR automated attendance/entry systems as a security device.

Factors Affecting 1986-87 Program Implementation

Four specific changes in the program guidelines set forth by the Chancellor for 1986-87 had an impact on the schools in the DPI. These were more flexible criteria for identifying students at risk, with an increased emphasis on student retention rather than retrieval; options to use funds for summer programs for students and for district level liaison between the schools and the Board of Education; the provision of transitional programs for students; and new requirements and funding for the high schools to develop linkage activities with their feeder middle schools.

For the most part, the programs experienced staff continuity between the first and second years. In at least eighteen schools, one or more CBO or Board of Education staff vacancy was not filled before January, reducing services to students. However, over 90 percent of the program staff were in place and many activities had begun by September.

The major start-up problem for the second year of the program concerned the identification of student participants. While many schools identified eligible students in September or earlier, these lists contained names of students who were LTAs or who never enrolled in the schools. Delays in obtaining budget and expenditure approvals also created start-up problems for the middle schools.

Overall, high school/CBO relations improved between the program's first and second years, with the collaboration reported to be better in six schools. In the middle schools, six of the fourteen CBO-based schools showed evidence that relations were worse.

The two programs with the lowest level of first-year implementation were health services and school level linkages. The health component was again poorly implemented in many sites, due in large part to the lack of resources for additional health services in the schools. With the new articulation guidelines, high schools planned and in many cases implemented new kinds of linkage activities; however, barriers to positive school-level collaboration still remained.

In order to explain why second year implementation proceeded as it did, the evaluators looked at a number of program and school variables. No single array of variables was observed to define a weakly implemented or strongly implemented program. Rather, patterns of variables seemed to determine how a program was implemented. The quality of program staff, and especially of the facilitator and site supervisor, was a key variable in successful implementation. Factors affecting the quality of staff included the amount of staff training and development provided and the availability of resources. Few middle school program staff reported having been adequately trained for their roles, and they had few opportunities to get together for development activities. The Office of Student Progress carried out technical assistance through their monitoring visits to the schools, much of it connected with insuring compliance to program guidelines, and some that was more developmental and problem solving. High school staff had more opportunities for individual and group training. Given the uncertainties involved in knowing how to address student attendance/dropout problems, even more training opportunities appear to be called for. Time was a scarce resource for program staff, especially for those facilitators whose positions were not full-time.

Schools' perceptions of need for the dropout prevention program affected implementation. Schools which were seriously concerned either to reorganize entirely or to address squarely the problems of at-risk students used the program as an opportunity to do so; at the other extreme, some used DPI more opportunistically as mainly a source of extra funds. High levels of support for the program usually could not be generated or sustained without the active involvement of the principal.

Some schools experimented quite actively with goals and strategies, and their staff appeared to sustain high enthusiasm for the program. High school programs fostered staff involvement through DPP teams, funding for a variety of teacher activities, and flexibility in program design. However, many middle school personnel continued to express serious reservations about the program, and staff enthusiasm was lower at this level, even when program staff had high commitment to their own individual tasks.

Community-based organizations provided services which schools themselves typically do not provide, and also stimulated schools' own planning efforts. Individual CBOs differed with regard to their roles in defining school goals and strategies, and single CBOs behaved differently in different school settings, depending primarily on the quality of school/CBO relations and on staff skills. In general, schools and CBOs at the middle school level received very little assistance in learning to collaborate well. The situation was somewhat better for the high schools.

With a few exceptions, schools did not develop sophisticated ways to keep track of program activities and outcomes, and in some cases, especially in middle schools, did not have the time, training, or inclination to use the information at their disposal. Information management and program documentation require a special balance: too much paperwork interferes with delivering a program, or even with using it to monitor the program internally; too little paperwork, or documentation of services, makes it impossible to examine the program internally or externally.

Dropout prevention programs were more easily integrated into schools' overall programs when principals were committed and involved, when schools had past histories of innovation in this area, and when parent involvement was fostered by the principals and the programs. CBOs helped the programs to integrate with neighborhood programs and service agencies.

Analysis of Middle School Monthly Summary of Service Reports

In 1986-87, Board of Education DPP staff in the 15 Project Connect middle schools submitted Middle School Service Reports (MSSRs) each month for each child in the program to the Office of

Student Progress (OSP). BOE staff in the 14 CBO-model middle schools also submitted MSSRs each month for each child in the program to OSP, while CBO staff in 11 of these schools submitted MSSRs to Teachers College for November, February, and May. MSSRs were not submitted by the CBO staff of Touro College, whose contract was terminated in March. A preliminary analysis has been performed on the total of 8004 MSSRs submitted for the 29 schools in November and February. Although BOE staff did serve children in the District 9 (Touro College) schools, this summary will not include these schools further.

The average number of students served at a given time in the Project Connect schools ranged between 140 and 145. The average number of students served in the CBO schools depended on whether the BOE and the CBO staff in a given school worked with the same or with different students. In nine schools in three districts and working with three CBOs, the BOE and CBO staff served the same students and the average number of students served per month ranged between 80 and 105. In two schools in one district working with a fourth CBO, the BOE and CBO staff served different students, and the average number in each school was 150.

Overall, the most services reported in the two months combined were mail and phone (11903), followed by individual guidance (8291). Intermediate were extended day (3953), group guidance (3302), school-student conferences (3179), auto dialer (2049), and home visits (1923). Relatively few services were reported as parent conferences/guidance (990), contact with health personnel (456), and participation in linkage activity (419). Alternative education services during the school day were not recorded on the MSSRs and thus are not included in this analysis.

Differences in the interpretation of what constitutes a school-student conference or an individual guidance session partially accounted for extreme variations in the number of services reported from one school to another. The total number of these transactions reported in some schools could only be construed as guidance or conference contacts, rather than as sessions. This broad reporting occurred in schools of both models, but was particularly pronounced in the CBO reports from one district. Only the BOE reports were monitored by OSP in 1986-87, but all DPP staff's MSSRs will be monitored by OSP in 1987-88. The analysis points to recording issues that need to be worked out with both BOE and CBO staff.

In most of the areas of service, even allowing for the differences in interpretation of conference and guidance contacts, there were substantial differences from one school to another in the frequencies of services reported. Again allowing for differences of interpretation, it still appears that the CBO schools emphasized counseling more than the PC schools. The analysis explored ways of examining the data to determine what proportions of students in different schools, and in the different models, receive various levels of service. Whether service is more effective when it is concentrated on fewer students or when it is spread out over a larger number of students is a key question for appraising the different case management strategies used by BOE and CBO staff.

The evaluators recommend that the MSSR be used more within the schools to monitor services to students and to guide further program development and modification. The projected change of the middle school facilitator's position to full-time, and OSP's scheme to computerize the MSSR data, should contribute to this more planful use of the MSSR, as should a problem-solving style of technical assistance to the schools.

Analysis of 1985-86 Dropouts

Of the more than 4,000 students targeted to receive services in the 29 DPI middle schools, only 59 were discharged as dropouts during the 1985-86 school year. This represented a proportion of 1.2% of the middle school target population. Because dropout discharges were so rare at the middle school level, there were no meaningful school-to-school differences in rates of dropout discharges.

Of the more than 6,000 high school students participating in DPI programs, about 1,100 were discharged as dropouts, representing 17.2% of the target group. Students targeted for DPI services were about twice as likely as other high school students to be discharged as dropouts during the 1985-86 school year. This presumably is because they were more at risk of dropping out than other students.

Among the targeted high school students, those who were more at risk, according to their prior educational histories and background characteristics, were more likely to be discharged as dropouts. Older students, students with lower reading test scores, students with worse prior attendance patterns, and students who had failed more subjects prior to entering the program all were more likely to be discharged as dropouts than their peers.

Some high schools were more likely to discharge targeted students as dropouts than others. These differences persisted when school-to-school differences in the types of students enrolled in the DPI program were taken into account. At this point, it is impossible to tell whether these differences in dropout discharge rates are due to DPI program effects, school effects, or school-to-school differences in administrative policies and practices. The next stage of analysis in the evaluation project will attempt to establish which forces are contributing to these effects, and to outcome differences in attendance, achievement, and attitude of targeted students more generally.

APPENDIX C

EVALUATION OF THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

FINAL REPORT ON THE MIDDLE SCHOOLS FOR YEAR TWO, 1986-87

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Dropout Prevention Initiative Evaluation
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1986-87 Final Report
Part One: Middle Schools

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The 1986-87 school year was the second full year of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative (DPI), involving 10 high schools and 29 feeder middle schools from the Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) and three high schools from the state's Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention (AIDP) Program. This evaluation report focuses exclusively on the middle school programs and presents data on middle school student characteristics, program services, and outcomes for this Year Two. In an Interim Report published in September, 1987, Teachers College analyzed the Year Two implementation in detail. Those findings are summarized and added to in the present report.

The 29 DPP middle schools were divided into two program models in 1986-87. In 15 of the schools, personnel hired by the Board of Education (BOE) provided all program services (the Project Connect model). In another 11 schools, a major part of the services were provided by community-based organizations under contract to the Board of Education (the CBO model), while some BOE staff were also employed. In three schools, the CBO contract was cancelled in the middle of the year, and the schools shifted to the Project Connect model. These schools are not included in the comparisons of the Project Connect and CBO models as such, but they are included in analyses at other levels, since the developments in this case can be regarded as one of the natural courses of implementation of a program as complex as the DPP.

Program Implementation

By June, 1987, the implementation of the Dropout Prevention Program was found to have reached a stage of routine activity for most of the components in most of the middle schools--"routine" meaning that activities occurred on a regular basis, procedures were set, and staff knew their roles, but also that few major changes had been undertaken during the year. This was a substantial development beyond the program's first year, when more activities were in start-up phases. At the same time, relatively few components were being scrutinized within schools for refinement or for larger, more general changes, except as the Office of Student Progress initiated planning at the very end of the year for program-wide changes anticipated for 1987-88.

Program facilitation occurred daily from the beginning of the school year in most middle schools. Under attendance outreach, a variety of strategies were utilized to interact with families and students concerning student absences. Guidance or counseling in some form was offered in most of the schools, although in a few schools the DPP staff did not include someone who was licensed or certified for counseling. Career education was the most prevalent alternative educational program, especially in the Project Connect schools; recreation and tutoring were other prominent alternative education activities, especially in the CBO schools. Health services and activities to link students with high schools were offered on a much less regular basis. These statements denote how staff resources were allocated. The frequencies of actual services to students are indicated by records of these services, which are summarized below.

Support for the program at the district level varied considerably from one district to another. However, the Office of Student Progress (OSP) carried out a centralized system of supervision of the Board of Education DPP staff in all 29 schools. The system included the collection of Monthly Summary of Service Records and visits to the schools to provide technical assistance to staff. Both the testimony of staff and records of the OSP visits to the schools suggest that the technical assistance consisted first of all in trying to bring about compliance with Board of Education standards for the program and only secondarily in problem solving with DPP staff.

Despite the characterization of program activity as "routine," individual schools varied considerably in the problems they confronted--for example, budget and staffing, their solutions to these problems, and the innovativeness of the components they implemented. The Interim Report described examples of successfully implemented components, and this Final Report includes some further observations about implementation in those schools for which exceptionally high gains or losses have been found on the outcome measures.

Key factors that affected implementation in the schools included the timing of budget approval and the availability of funds, the availability of staff to fill positions, the relationships between CBOs and schools, staff quality, and the schools' overall commitment to the Dropout Prevention Program, especially the commitment of the principals. We judged twelve of the 29 principals highly supportive of their DPP programs.

The Dropout Prevention Program was implemented sufficiently in 1986-87 to ask--summatively for that implementation stage and formatively for stages to follow, what outcomes did the program in this form have?

Characteristics of Students Served

The New York City Board of Education has a data base that is matched by few large city school systems in the nation. Not only does it require an enormous effort by the Office of Educational Assessment (OEA) to collect these data generally, but a tremendous amount of work by DPP staff in the schools and by the Office of Student Progress has gone into the special data collection required for this evaluation. It is in this context that we make the observations about missing data that are necessary to interpret our findings validly.

The primary analyses of student characteristics are based on data for 3922 middle school students provided by OEA. However, in a separate data collection, services were recorded on OSP's Monthly Summary of Service Reports for an estimated 4125 students in the months of November, February, and/or May, 1986-87, of whom Teachers College has identified 4077, and of these cases only 3382 match cases in the OEA set. This is mainly accounted for by the fact that the OEA sample does not include some students who were served only at the beginning or at the end, but not in the middle of the 1986-87 school due to some students leaving the DPP schools, and programs adding students late in the year. The statistics from OEA, then, represent an estimated 90% of all the students served by DPP in the middle schools in Year Two.

For the 3922 students in the OEA sample, data are missing for a substantial number of cases: 30% are missing either 85-86 or 86-87 attendance data, 17% are missing either 85-86 or 86-87 courses data, and 15% to 38% are missing one or another reading or math test score. It is likely that the students for whom there are missing data, or who were served but are not included in the OEA data set at all, are significantly different from the students for whom the data are complete. In particular, students for whom 1986-87 attendance data are missing but for whom courses passed data are available in fact had a significantly lower rate of passing courses in 1986-87 (58%) than students for whom both attendance and courses data are available (71%).

Almost half (48.9%) of the DPP middle school students in the OEA sample were enrolled in the eighth grade. About one-third (32.8%) were enrolled in the seventh grade, and one fifth (18.3%) were in the ninth grade.

The modal age of targeted students was 14 (median 14.0, mean 13.8). Comparing actual age with age expected for grade level, 22.2% were two years overage for their grade and 3.8% were three or more years overage.

Only 245 of the 3922 students had been administered the Language Assessment Battery (LAB). Of these, 61.6% (representing just 3.9% of the total sample) had test scores below the 20th percentile, and were thus identified as having Limited English Proficiency (LEP). This might have been an underestimation of the proportion of students in the OEA sample with limited English proficiency, since much higher percentages of the middle school students responding to the Teachers College survey (see below) indicated that they spoke a language other than English with their friends (18%), or at home (34%), or said they lived in a home where a language other than English was spoken by the adults (45%).

The average prior year attendance for students was 78.0%. Prior year attendance was higher in the fall (81% average) than in the spring semester (74.2%).

Almost half (46.4%) of the students had failed 2 or more major subjects in the prior year. Two-fifths (40.5%) were reading below grade level. These are all indicators of a population at risk and were criteria of selection for DPP services.

All 3922 students in the OEA sample were reported by DPP staff to have met one or another of the program's eligibility criteria. This check-off of eligibility indicated that over 80% of the targeted students were absent either 30 or more days in the 1985-86 school year or at least 15 days in Spring 1986. The remaining students were reported to have had slightly better prior attendance but to have met one or more secondary eligibility criteria, such as excessive lateness, half-day absences, LTA or LEP status, low reading ability, overage, prior course failure, or prior year program participation. A direct analysis of student characteristics on the OEA data found that approximately 65% of the students for whom 1985-86 attendance data are available were eligible on the basis of attendance. However, it is likely that a higher proportion of the students for whom these data are not available had low attendance. The proportion of students claimed to be eligible on the basis of secondary criteria was confirmed.

There were very large differences between schools in the targeted students' levels of risk on the various dimensions. The average prior year attendance rate of targeted students in the different schools varied from a high of 85.2% to a low of 69%. The average rate of passing major courses the previous year varied from 87.3% to 43.7%. In one school only 8.3% of students were overage, while in another 45% were overage. These differences imply very different patterns of need in the various schools and the necessity for different strategies for adapting staff to these needs. They might also imply basic differences among the schools themselves, in so far as schools might have been more or less effective in working with students so that they did attend school, pass courses, and get promoted to the next grade, during the year (or years) prior to 1986-87.

Records of Services

The evaluation had access to two DPP records of services to middle school students. The first record was a one-time check-off by DPP staff for whether service was received by individual students in each of five areas of service. Almost all targeted students (96.3%) were reported as having received attendance outreach services, and the majority of students as receiving performance incentives (88.6%), guidance and counseling services (78.3%), health services (67.2%), and career education services (73.2%). Participation in one or more of several different kinds of high school linkage services was reported for two-thirds (67.2%) of the students while less than half (43.1%) were reported as having taken part in an extended day, before- or after-school program. The individual schools varied considerably in the proportions of students who were reported as receiving the various services. Guidance and counseling was reported for larger proportions of CBO students than of Project Connect students, while for health services, career education, and high school linkage the pattern was reversed.

Students with high prior absences were less likely to receive services than students who were at a middle or low level of risk, except in guidance and counseling, which was reported more for students with higher prior absences.

The one-time check-off data are not nearly so detailed as the second source of service information, the Office of Student Progress's system for recording services in each category during each month. In 1986-87, Board of Education DPP staff in the 15 Project Connect middle schools submitted Monthly Summary of Service Reports (MSSRs) for each child in the program to the Office of Student Progress. BOE staff in the 14 CBO-model middle schools also submitted MSSRs each month for each child in the program to OSP, while CBO staff in 11 of these schools submitted MSSRs to Teachers College for November, February, and May. MSSRs were not submitted by the CBO staff of Touro College, whose contract was terminated in March; District 9 is thus not included in the comparisons of Project Connect and CBO-model schools, though it is included in the overall statistics for services reported (and later in the general analyses for DPP effects). Teachers College has analyzed the MSSRs for November, February, and May in the 1986-87 school year.

Overall, the most services reported in the three months combined were mail and phone (21,629 units), followed by individual guidance (13,957 contacts). In a high middle range were extended day sessions (7,639), school-student conferences (6,187), and group guidance (5,843), while home visits (3,874), autodialer (2,617), and parent conferences or guidance (2,025) were in a low middle range. Relatively few services were reported under high school linkage activity (1,286) and contact with health personnel (809).

In most of the areas of service, there were substantial differences from one school to another in the frequencies of services reported. Still, in most areas the frequencies of services were fairly comparable between the CBO model schools and the Project Connect schools. The one exception was that the CBO schools appeared to emphasize individual and group counseling more than the PC schools. Much smaller proportions of students were reported having no conference or guidance contact in the CBO schools than in the PC schools, and, conversely, much higher proportions of students were reported having four or more such contacts in the CBO schools than in the PC schools, during the three months examined. However, differences in the interpretation of what constitutes a school-student conference or an individual guidance session partially accounted for these differences between the models, as well as for extreme variations in the number of conferences or individual guidance sessions reported in the individual schools.

Program Outcomes

*The average attendance of the targeted students in 1986-87 was 76.7%, while in 1985-86 the average attendance of the students had been 78.9%. Targeted students passed an average of 70.1% of their major courses in 1986-87, or about three and one-half out of five major courses, compared with a pass rate of 64.7% in 1985-86. For the students for whom data in both years was available, the average attendance of Year Two program participants declined 1.6% (or 2.9 days) from prior year levels, and students passed on average 4.2% more courses (i. e., about 0.2 of one course more) than they had the year before. These outcomes represent a small gain over Year One of the Dropout Prevention Program, when students lost about 4% attendance and passed about 1.5% more courses than the year before. In 1986-87, 49.5% of the targeted students improved their attendance. This result virtually met the Chancellor's objective that 50% of the targeted students improve their attendance. Further, 59.4% of the students who had failed at least one course in 1985-86 increased the proportion of courses they passed in 1986-87. This amount exceeded the objective that at least half of the students increase their proportions of courses passed in 1986-87. At the same time, 36.5% of the students who had not failed a course in the prior year did fail one or more courses in 1986-87. Analysis of the outcomes for the cohort in later years will be necessary to determine whether the program in Year Two improved students' chances of completing high school appreciably. Doubt is also cast by a finding for a control group of 790 students in the same 29 middle schools (whose prior attendance made them eligible

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* Note: The following paragraph has been changed to correct the attendance improvement percent given in the original report. JCG 1-21-90

for services but who were not enrolled in the DPP or a similar program), there was an attendance loss of 2.4% between 1985-86 (67.4%) and 1986-87 (65.0%). The change for the control group, then, was very similar to the change for the DPP targeted students.

While the average attendance rate in the schools overall in 1986-87 was 76.7%, the rate in individual schools ranged from 65% to 85.4%. Taking into account the prior year attendance, the greatest increase in attendance for a school was +4.5% and the greatest decrease was -6.7%.

The average rate of passing major courses in the schools in 1986-87 was 70.1%, but the rate in individual schools varied from 52.1% to 82.2%. Relative to the number of courses passed in 1985-86, the largest increase for a school was +28.4% and the largest decrease -21.8%.

Regression analyses

School effect. A regression analysis controlled for students' prior year attendance and then asked how attendance in 1986-87 was affected by the students being in one school or another. Prior attendance accounted for 31.8% of the variance in Year Two attendance, while the particular school in which a student was enrolled had a much smaller relation to the outcome measure, explaining 2.8% of the variance in 1986-87 attendance when prior attendance was controlled.

A similar analysis held constant students' rate of passing courses the prior year and asked how the proportion of courses passed in 1986-87 was affected by schools. The proportion of subjects passed in 1985-86 explained 11.5% of variation in subjects passed in Year Two, while schools accounted for an additional 5.9% of the variance. This indicates a substantial influence of a student's being in one school versus another on courses passed. There was a difference of 31.8%, or one and a half out of five courses, between the school whose students had the highest adjusted proportion of subjects passed and the school with the lowest adjusted proportion.

District effect. When districts were used instead of schools in these analyses, they explained only 0.8% of the variance in 1986-87 attendance after prior year attendance was controlled, and 2.3% of the variance of courses passed after courses passed in the prior year was controlled. Since CBOs are located in different districts and to a certain extent are identified with these districts, this implies that differences between the CBOs did not account for much of the variance, especially in students' attendance gains or losses.

Model effect. There were only very small differences between the Project Connect (PC) and CBO models in terms of the program outcomes. The average attendance in 1986-87 was 77.5% for the PC students and 76.1% for CBO students, while the average change in attendance was -1.4% for PC students and -1.5% for CBO students. The average proportion of courses passed in 1986-87 in the PC schools was 71.8% and in the CBO schools was 70.8%, while the change in courses passed averaged 5.3% for the PC model and 4.1% for the CBO model. A regression analysis found that the models explained only 0.02% of the variance in attendance after prior year attendance was controlled, and 0.03% of the variation in subjects passed after prior year subjects passed was controlled.

Effect of services recorded on check-off. Two sets of regression analyses were performed to examine the relationship between services received and outcomes. First, analyses were carried out using the one-time check-off data. After controlling for prior year attendance, services checked accounted for 2.8% of variance in 1986-87 attendance. Performance incentives had the largest positive effect on attendance and attendance outreach was associated with the largest negative effect. Extended school day, career education, and guidance services had very small positive relationships with attendance, high school linkage had almost no relationship with attendance, and health services had a small negative effect on attendance. In general, this configuration seems to reflect how the services were being distributed--attendance outreach to absent students, health referral to students returning from an absence, and counseling and educational programs to students present in school to be counseled or taught--rather than the success of the services in changing attendance.

Similarly, a regression analysis using the check-off data found that services explained 2.6% of variance in subjects passed after controlling for students' initial differences in subjects passed the prior year. Again, subjects passed was negatively related to attendance outreach and health services and was positively related to other services, most of all to the receipt of incentives, which one expects to be awarded to students who have improved in attendance or grades.

Effect of services recorded on MSSRs. The second set of analyses was conducted using the three-month sample of Monthly Summary of Service Reports. The number of students with complete OEA and MSSR records for this analysis was 2449, representing 63% of the total OEA sample and 59% of the total MSSR sample. Prior year attendance explained 28.5% of the variance of 1986-87 attendance, and the MSSR services explained an additional 12.3% of variance. Students who received more communications (mail, autodial, and telephone), home visits, health referrals, and parent conferences or guidance had lower 1986-87 attendance, once their prior attendance is taken into account. Students who received more extended day services, group guidance, high school linkage, individual guidance, and school-student conferences had higher 1986-87 attendance, after prior attendance is controlled. As with the check-off data, the MSSR findings generally seem to reflect the distribution of services vis-a-vis students' attendance as much as the effect of the services in changing attendance.

For the analysis of subjects passed with MSSR data, complete records were available for 2939 students. Courses passed in the previous year explained only 11.6% of the variance in the proportion of 1986-87 subjects passed. The MSSR services explained an additional 9.2%. Here, however, it was communication, home visits, and meetings with parents that were associated with a decline in subjects passed, while group guidance, extended day, and school-student conferences were associated with a gain. Health referrals, high school linkage, and individual guidance were not significant.

In order to check the possibility that students' receipt of different services depends on students' current attendance, and that attendance thus actually accounts for some of the variance in outcome that services appear to explain, an analysis was done that controlled on 1986-87 (current year) attendance and examined the contribution of services to courses passed. Current attendance accounted for 28% of the variance in courses passed in 1986-87 and the MSSR-recorded services accounted for only an additional 1%. The only service which maintained a significant contribution to courses passed after attendance was group guidance or counseling. Each session of group guidance accounted for a 1.3% increase in the proportion of subjects passed. This analysis probably underestimates, as the analysis controlling on 1985-86 courses passed overestimates, the contribution of the MSSR services to students' passing courses in 1986-87. While the program as a whole did not produce consistent gains in student outcomes in Year Two, group guidance is the program component which on the basis of the service data appears most likely to contribute to improved student performance.

Effect of group guidance on students at different levels of risk. A further analysis asked if group guidance made more of a difference for students at one level of risk than at another. After controlling for prior year attendance, the present-year attendance of the students with the highest levels of absence in the prior year was strongly affected by the number of group guidance sessions they had during the outcome year, while students with the lowest levels of previous absence were not affected by group guidance. While this interaction effect applied to the attendance outcome, however, it did not hold for the outcome of courses passed. Defining risk still in terms of prior-year attendance, group guidance contributed positively to courses passed for students at both high and low risk levels. Other analyses of the impact of services on students at different levels of risk are currently being conducted.

Despite the fact that these effects of group guidance are significant, they account for less variance than one wants to see for the effect of an intervention. The most apparent reason for this is that fewer than half of the students received even one group guidance session during the three months represented by the MSSR.

Results of the Student Survey

Teachers College administered a survey to 1995 targeted middle school students in Spring 1987. Of these students, 1718 were also identified on the OEA tape for 1986-87, i.e., the survey respondents included 44% of the OEA sample. The results reported here are just for the 1718 students who are also in the OEA sample. Since the respondents were present in school on the days when the survey was given, and thus may have better average attendance than non-respondents, it is cautioned that the results are likely to portray a too optimistic picture of the backgrounds, attitudes, and experiences of the middle school target population as a whole.

Four-ninths (46%) of the responding students identified themselves as Hispanic or Spanish. About one-third (32%) said they were black or Afro-American, and an additional 8% described themselves as Asian-Americans or Pacific Islanders. Only 4% of the respondents described themselves as white, while 9% selected "other". Forty percent of the students said that the adults in their home spoke Spanish most of the time.

The vast majority of the respondents lived with their mother, stepmother, or female guardian, and just under half (48%) lived with their father, stepfather, or male guardian. Well over half of the students lived with at least two other children in the home.

Many students did not know how far their mothers or fathers went through school, although of those who did know more than half reported that their parent(s) had completed high school. A large proportion (43%) of the respondents thought that they would finish college, and an additional 22% anticipated attending some post-secondary school. Only 6% of the respondents said they did not expect to graduate from high school.

Nearly a quarter of the students did not have telephones in their homes.

A large majority of the students had worked for pay, and of these, one-quarter were working 21 hours or more per week at their current or most recent job. More than half indicated that they go out with a boyfriend or girlfriend at least once a week.

Targeted students described their schools as the locus of a considerable amount of violence. Most of the respondents had seen attacks by students on other students, and the majority had also seen attacks by students on teachers and by teachers on students. About a quarter of the students said that they were at least sometimes afraid that someone would hurt or bother them at school, or on the way to or from school.

About a quarter of the respondents claimed that there was almost always so much noise in class that they could not keep their minds on class, or so much noise in the hall that their teachers could not teach. On the other hand, another quarter of the students said there was almost never a disruptive amount of noise in the hall or in the classroom.

While a quarter of the students believed that their teachers almost never treated them with respect, another quarter believed that their teachers held them in high regard. These differences in students' experience suggest important variations in both the school environment itself and in students' sensitivity to positive or negative facets of the school environment.

The survey asked students about their experiences with a variety of DPP program components, but it cannot be assumed that students responded only in terms of DPP sponsored services, e.g., in saying whether they had gone on a trip. Three-quarters reported learning about different kinds of jobs or careers at least once during the school year. At least two-thirds of the students had received one or another attendance incentive; a like figure had been given some form of health care in the school; and two thirds had participated in some kind of high school linkage event. More than half had attended an extended-day program at least once. Nearly half of the respondents reported that they had not talked one-on-one with [illegible] teacher, counselor or other adult in the school about problems at school or at home, and three-fifths reported no group counseling. Three-fifths learned about different careers less than once a month. Over three-fifths had not been brought into direct contact with a high school through a class visit or attending a special event or after-school activity at a high school. Three-quarters claimed to have received no tutoring during the school year (indeed, tutoring was an option, but not mandated, under alternative education).

We have not yet correlated the students' survey responses with the MSSR reports of services to these same students, but it is clear that many of the respondents perceived low levels of service, despite this being the sample of targeted students who were in school to respond to the survey. It is particularly noticeable that the students reported receiving one-on-one counseling less than is suggested by the MSSR frequencies for individual guidance or school-student conferences; at the same time their reports of group discussion were consistent with the MSSR reports for group guidance.

The students' reports of services received varied significantly according to whether they were in CBO schools or in PC schools. There were no differences for various incentives and only slight differences on several indicators of attendance outreach and health services. However, students in the CBO schools reported significantly higher levels of talking one-on-one about problems, discussing problems in groups, and tutoring, while PC students reported more frequent career education services. These differences paralleled staff reports from the CBO and PC schools on both the OEA service check-off and the MSSR.

In response to a question about different reasons for absence from school, by far the most common reason given by the students was their own illness. The next most common reasons were "just didn't feel like going", having to take care of someone at home, and having problems at home. Much smaller, but still significant numbers of students said they had missed at least a day of school because they wanted to do something with friends, had problems with other students, had problems with an adult at school, their family left the city for a while, or they had to work.

Two-thirds of the students said that when they are absent a lot of days, the school sends a letter to their home. Less than half, however, said that their parent or guardian is asked to come to the school when they have been absent a lot of days, or that someone from the school visits their home. Three-fifths reported that after their most recent 1986-87 absence, a teacher, counselor or other adult in the school asked them where they had been; conversely, two-fifths of the students reported that this did not occur or that they did not know. At the same time, very few students reported a negative reaction from teachers when they returned to class, and most students said they received help in catching up, either from a teacher (30%), another student (35%), or someone else (9%). A few (7%) claimed they didn't need to catch up on any work, and a sizeable fraction (20%) said that when they were absent from classes a long time, they just fell behind.

Four-fifths of the students reported at least one lateness of a period or more in length during the 1986-87 school year. But half of the responding students said that they never cut classes on days when they were at the school.

There was a great deal of variability in students' reports of how much they liked school. Most questions showed a clumping of about one half of the responses in the middle, with about a quarter reporting positive attitudes and the remaining quarter reporting negative attitudes. Students' liking of their classes and of work in class were more skewed, with more students reporting positive feelings about their classes.

Teachers College is currently carrying out a set of multivariate analyses that control on a variety of student background variables and then examine the influence of survey derived school environment measures and program service indicators on the outcomes of student attendance, courses passed, and students' liking of school. The results of these analyses will be included in a future report.

Schools with Exceptional Year Two Outcomes

Although there was not a substantial change for the schools overall in the attendance or courses passed of DPP targeted students, there were large differences between the schools that gained the most and the schools that lost the most, especially in courses passed. Using the regression analyses assessing the relative effects of the schools after prior year attendance or courses passed had been accounted for, we identified the four schools with the greatest attendance gains, the four with the greatest gains in courses passed (seven schools altogether, because of one school appearing in both sets of high gain schools), the four schools with the greatest attendance losses, and five schools with the greatest losses in courses passed (again seven schools altogether, because two schools appeared on both lists). In order to examine these exceptional schools in depth, we compared them on a variety of indices from statistical profiles compiled by the Board of Education, as well as from our observations of implementation in these schools in Year Two.

On most indices of school organization that we examined, the exceptional gain schools were not systematically different from the loss schools. The several sets of schools did not differ systematically in the size of the school register, the three-year stability rate, intermediate vs. junior high organization, or utilization rate. This is not to say that any of these variables is unimportant in the life and achievement of a school, but that in themselves these variables did not appear to explain the relative sucesses and failures of the schools. The courses gain schools had a larger average class size than the courses loss schools, and class size correlated positively with gain in courses passed in an analysis for all of the middle schools. From this we infer that the gain schools countered the expected effects of larger class size, through measures like the special grouping of targeted students in smaller classes that was observed in one school, and the high personalization of DPP staff contact with students that was observed in two others.

When the reading and math test scores of the total general registers of the gain and loss schools were compared, the only difference was that math scores were systematically higher in the attendance gains schools than in the attendance loss schools.

Focusing more specifically on the characteristics of the targeted students themselves, some differences did emerge. Targeted students in the attendance gain schools had passed more courses in the previous year than targeted students in the attendance loss schools. Likewise, targeted students in the attendance gain schools had somewhat higher reading and math test scores the previous year than targeted students in the attendance loss schools. However, the only prior-year academic difference between the students in the gain and loss schools on the courses passed outcome was a higher math test average in the gain schools than in the loss schools. Finally, targeted students in the loss schools, both for attendance and courses passed, were older than the targeted students in the gain schools. All in all, the targeted students in the loss schools started the year somewhat more at risk than the targeted students in the gain schools. Still, when regression analyses controlled on one or another of these variables, the same schools emerged as the strongest gain or loss schools.

The DPP program was implemented slightly earlier in the year in the gain schools than in the loss schools. The activities in alternative education appeared to have been more developed in the courses gain schools compared with the courses loss schools. While career education in general did not contribute strongly to the prediction of gain in the regression analyses, it was measured only by the one-time check-off. Hands-on or experiential business enterprise, career-education video, and/or field trip activities were found in virtually all of the gain schools.

Mail and phone services did not distinguish the gain schools from the loss schools, but home visits did. There were substantially more home visits in the attendance gain schools than in the attendance loss schools, and in the courses gain schools than in the courses loss schools. Thus, even though home visits correlated negatively with attendance and courses passed at the level of the individual student, they seemed to correlate positively with gain at a school level of analysis. (The contribution of home visits to students' attendance and passing courses is still far from being understood.) School-student conferences, individual guidance, and extended day were all reported as occurring more frequently in the gain schools than in the loss schools, while group guidance occurred more frequently only in the courses gain schools. The services that appear to have been more frequent in the gain schools tended to involve direct, personal contact with students, though this might not apply to home visiting.

A more qualitative look at the individual DPP programs in the gain and loss schools revealed important patterns. In both sets of schools there were situations where one or another staff position had not been filled or was filled inadequately, but it was in the gain schools that this was dealt with more effectively, usually by someone else stepping in and meeting the need. Similarly, the gain schools coped more successfully with shortages of funds due to budgeting problems, or used other funds to supplement program monies. Support from the school administration was especially strong in several of the gain schools. Several of the gain schools were particularly inventive in their ways of gaining access to the students and, equally, of being accessible to students. Both counseling and career education, especially the enterprise activities, were seen as avenues for reaching students. The gain schools tended to have recorded more services that involved direct contact with students, though record keeping itself was not necessarily a priority with these schools. The DPP staff of the schools that gained appeared to be driven more by the goals of the program than by a need to conform to external expectations.

Program Costs and Cost-Effectiveness

Funding for the 1986-87 middle school Dropout Prevention Program came from two sources: state AI/DP reimbursable funds ($1,672,570), and the city's special DPP funding ($3,150,000). The total middle school allocation of $4,822,570 represents 35.4% of total program funding for the Dropout Prevention Initiative. Both the community school districts and the CBOs received increases in their allocations over Year One. District budgets averaged $467,997, with an average of $448,895 for each district in the PC model, $293,220 for each CBO, and $193,880 for each district in the CBO model (including the higher allocation to District 9 after its CBO contract was cancelled).

Districts varied considerably both in their spending levels and their expenditure rates. No district overspent its DPP budget. Average district expenditures were $452,079 in the CBO districts and $347,522 in the PC districts. The CBO districts spent a higher proportion of their budgets than did those in the PC model -- 93% vs. 78%, excluding District 9. Higher district expenditures were not associated with higher numbers of students served. In fact, because the schools in the CBO model served fewer students than did those in the PC model, per pupil expenditures in the CBO districts were higher than those in the PC districts ($1359 and $778, respectively).

Spending differences were largely related to initial differences in planned staffing, and later to staff vacancies, differences in the costs of staff hourly pay and OTPS, bookkeeping/accounting variations among districts, and, to a slight degree, salary differentials for the same professional lines across districts (DPP budgets were figured on real salary estimates rather than unit costs). On the whole, DPP funds purchased the services of three to five full-time equivalent staff persons per school; part-time staff, such as after-school instructors, and non-personnel costs such as for attendance incentives or trips, were additional.

Since the DPP programs in the 29 middle schools had variation both in their program expenditures and outcomes, we used regression analysis to examine the relation between expenditures and three outcomes: change in attendance, change in proportion of courses passed, and change in reading scores. Although the relationship was in the expected direction for all three outcomes (i.e., more expenditures led to higher outcomes), only the relationship for attendance approached statistical significance. An incremental expenditure of $500 per student would be associated with a one percent increase in average attendance.

A regression analysis that entered the models into the equation with expenditures and outcomes found that an incremental dollar of expenditure would have the same effect for both models, although at a given level of expenditure, the attendance outcome in the PC model would be slightly (but not significantly) higher than in the CBO model.

Year Three

Teachers College is currently observing the implementation of the Dropout Prevention Program in 1987-88 and will at a later time report these findings together with the outcomes for Year Three. However, it is anticipated that DPP will continue in the middle schools in 1988-89, and so our recommendations at this point should take some cognizance of current developments in the program.

A complex process of planning within the Board of Education resulted in the Chancellor's Special Circular #37, May 8, 1987, which promulgated revised guidelines for the Dropout Prevention Program in 1987-88. The most far-reaching change for the program in the middle schools was prescribed for the alternative education component. Each school was to choose from among four models of alternative education: a mini-school, a block program, a remedial/enrichment teacher, or a district-developed model. While the lead time was very short, the Office of Student Progress initiated planning in the late spring and summer that resulted in a number of the schools and their districts becoming very involved. At the same time, however, Circular #37 had specified that compensatory instructional costs must be charged to Federal and State reimbursable programs and that mandated alternative education programs could not be charged to AIDP (or DPP). The circular further prohibited pulling students out of classes for alternative education. At some point in this process, it was decided that Pupil Compensatory Education Needs (PCEN) funds would be used to pay for alternative education, and then it was realized that this required conformity to a variety of New York State guidelines that virtually prohibited the implementation of some of the plans that had been developed under the original four options. Many of the original plans were cancelled early in 1987-88. A PCEN remedial basic skills program is now being implemented in nearly all of the schools. However, distress over the cancellation of the original plans, delayed budgets, and staffing and scheduling problems not only affected the implementation of the PCEN alternative education component in a number of the schools, in some schools other components of the program were set back as well. Because of this, Year Three cannot be regarded as simply a year of consolidation. We expect the divergence of outcomes between different schools to be even greater than was found for Year Two, at the same time that there will be a first wave of new information about the effects of alternative education.

Recommendations

1. Schools in which the Dropout Prevention Program was more successful in Year Two took initiatives and used their resources creatively to solve problems. Each school should be encouraged to take charge of its own Dropout Prevention Program. This means that the Office of Student Progress should work in a more advisory capacity and that control over program decisions should be shared between OSP and the schools. A spirit of fostering options in the schools, which characterized the initial planning for alternative education in Year Three, needs to be maintained. At the same time, a much longer lead time is needed for successful planning than the schedule for implementing alternative education in Year Three has allowed.

2. Group guidance contributed significantly in Year Two to targeted students' attendance and passing courses, especially the latter. However, relatively few students received group guidance on a regular basis. Furthermore, little is known yet about what form group guidance took in the different schools where it was used. The Dropout Prevention Program is encouraged to explore group guidance more deliberately. Schools that elect to implement or expand group guidance should be furnished with staff development, through a CBO or the Board of Education as appropriate. How group guidance is used in the different schools and its different results should be studied collaboratively with the schools. Group guidance requires administrative support for staff development and to negotiate the pull-outs of students that are usually necessary.

3. Experiential or hands-on career education activity was found in nearly all of the gain schools. In at least some of these schools it was observed to be a medium through which staff could connect positively with students and students could exercise responsibility and could interact cooperatively with one another. Ironically, career education has been nearly abandoned in the middle schools in 1987-88, and a remedial basic skills program put in its place, in part because DPP staff in many of the schools rebelled against a paperwork curriculum in career education that OSP attempted to implement in 1986-87. Staff need to be allowed to do what best enables them to involve students in constructive interpersonal activity. Alternative education in 1988-89 should include an experiential career education option for those schools where it meets both the needs of targeted students and the resources of DPP staff.

4. The effects of the PCEN alternative education program on outcomes for targeted students in 1987-88 will not be known for the program as a whole until the fall, but staff within schools may have some insight into this beforehand. The schools and OSP should balance the desirability of waiting until the general results are known and the need to follow through on plans that have already been made, including to make improvements in the supplementary instruction that is already in place. (A year ago, the evaluation recommended that ways be sought to "help students and teachers connect academically," specifically students returning to school from an absence. Schools will need to see if the PCEN classes are a help or a hindrance to this connection.) To the greatest extent possible, OSP's role should be to facilitate this process of improvement, orienting to judgments in the schools about what strategies have the greatest prospect for success.

5. OSP's regular collection of data for monitoring students' attendance and staff's services to students has produced valuable information. The attendance data should continue to be collected every day and transactions with students and their families should be recorded. However, services could be summarized for external review less often and still allow scrutiny of how services are being distributed to different categories of students. The full MSSR should be used only in alternate months, at most, to allow staff in the schools more time to study the data already being collected and to undertake more of their own inquiries into what services are needed. Along with the feedback of MSSR data from OSP, information should be provided to the schools directly from the evaluation to further enable the responsible parties in the schools to set goals and plan how to accomplish them.

6. Few students actually drop out of the middle schools, but the trajectories of absence and course failure that lead to dropping out remain largely unchanged in the DPP middle schools overall.

The dropout problem seems to be much bigger than the Dropout Prevention Program in the middle schools at this time. It may be that various elements of the program now in place will be important in a solution to this problem, as they appear to have been in the schools where there were exceptional gains in Year Two. What seems to be lacking most can be summarized as communication and impowerment. Obstacles lie in the paths between the middle school and the high school, the school and the family, the school and the community-based organization, the school and the health agency, indeed even the school and the Board of Education. As much effort as the Dropout Prevention Program has already invested in trying to overcome these barriers, there needs to be a different quality of communication and sense of control between the school and these other institutions that have the potential to affect the students' lives. We suggest that dropout prevention be approached as a problem requiring open communication first of all: between the school and other agents as well as between the school and its own students. Adopting a recommendation from Chancellor Green's inaugural address, we think the best place to begin in a number of the schools is with increased communication between the Dropout Prevention Program staff and the school principal.

APPENDIX D

EVALUATION OF THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

FINAL REPORT ON THE HIGH SCHOOLS FOR YEAR TWO, 1986-87

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Dropout Prevention Intiative Evaluation
Teachers College, Columbia University

1986-87 Final Report
Part Two: High Schools

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Introduction

The Dropout Prevention Initiative (DPI) is a project of the New York City Board of Education, in cooperation with the Mayor's Office of Youth Services and the city's Office of Management and Budget. Established in 1985, the Initiative received over $30 million in special city funding for the first three years of program operation. The Initiative offers middle school students and beginning high school students a wide range of services and, at the high school level, provides support for school-wide change efforts. In addition to school-based programming, the Initiative involves community-based organizations (CBOs) in dropout prevention; these organizations contract to work with students on-site in a school.

The 1986-87 school year was the second full year of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative. Forty-two schools were part of the Initiative during 1986-87, including 29 middle schools and 13 high schools. Of the high schools, 10 comprise the Board of Education's High School Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) and 3 are from the state-funded Attendance Improvement/ Dropout Prevention Program (AIDP). All of these high schools were initially selected to receive dropout prevention program funding because their dropout rates were above the city-wide average.

The Dropout Prevention Initiative has been organized to test the effectiveness of various models of service delivery. Four were designed at the high school level:

a) pure systemic model, in which services are directed toward changing the entire school environment;

b) modified systemic model, in which some case management services for targeted at-risk students are provided by CBOs, but the bulk of services are directed toward the school as a whole;

c) modified CBO model, in which case management services provided by community-based organizations are augmented with some funding for systemic services; and

d) pure CBO model, where the dropout prevention program consists almost entirely of case management services through a CBO.

No school adopted the "pure systemic" model, since all high schools have contracted with at least one community-based organization for case management services; thus, the schools originally assigned to the pure systemic model have been included in the modified systemic model for the evaluation. Similarly, only a small number of students in two of the three schools in the pure CBO model received CBO services only. These three schools are part of the state's AIDP program, and that program has a school-based component (which includes special instructional programming) for targeted students, even in the schools with community-based organizations. We have categorized the AIDP students getting school services, with or without CBO services, as the "school-based AIDP program."

Eleven different community-based organizations have been involved in the Dropout Prevention Initiative at the high school level. Most of the CBO programs are built around counseling and attendance monitoring and follow-up. Several of the CBOs provide job readiness training and/or volunteer or paid work experience opportunities for students. One of the CBOs teaches students outdoor survival skills; another program trains students to be conflict mediators and then provides mediation services to students and staff in school. Two CBOs direct their services primarily toward Hispanic students. The largest CBO program is Operation Success, a counseling and work readiness program that includes case management services, diagnostic vocational evaluations, opportunities for job skills training in several fields, and placements in educational internships. Operation Success is in place in all four schools in the modified CBO model and in all three schools in the pure CBO model.

The Dropout Prevention Initiative provides for the delivery of a range of supportive services to high school students, including program facilitation, attendance outreach, guidance and counseling, health services, linkages between middle schools and high schools, alternative educational programs, and school security. The Initiative was not originally intended to address the instructional needs of at-risk students, but to enable schools to help with problems that sometimes prevent students from participating fully in the regular academic program.

High school students were selected for program participation on the basis of prior year attendance (40 or more absences the prior year, or 20 or more absences the prior semester), course failure, or other risk characteristics.

The Institute for Urban and Minority Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, has undertaken a three-year evaluation of the Dropout Prevention Initiative, under contract with the Board of Education. The evaluation project has collected both quantitative and qualitative data on program implementation, the student population served, and performance outcomes. High school program implementation during 1986-87 was described in the Interim Report for Year Two, published in September, 1987. The Final Report on the High Schools for Year Two presents data on DPI high school student characteristics and outcomes for Year Two, with a discussion of a set of statistical data on program services, findings on school-level indicators of program effectiveness, and an analysis of program costs.

Characteristics of High School Students Participating in the Initiative, 1986-87

A total of 4854 students were listed by school and CBO personnel as having been part of the Dropout Prevention Initiative in 1986-87. These students were divided into several different samples, for evaluation purposes: a) full program rosters in the 10 DPP high schools (3348 students were named as having been targeted for services in the program); b) evaluation sample students in the 10 DPP high schools (a random sample of approximately 150 program students in each DPP high school, for a total of 1483 students); c) program students in the 3 AIDP high schools (all 1436 students who were named as having participated in the AIDP program during 1986-87 -- including 1147 who received both school and CBO services, 88 who received only school services, and 201 who received only CBO services in the program); and d) evaluation sample students in the 3 AIDP high schools (the 201 students who received CBO services only, included in the evaluation to represent the pure CBO model).

Several factors compromise the degree to which the program rosters accurately represent those students who actually participated in the Dropout Prevention Initiative. First is the difficulty of naming all program participants or beneficiaries. Some of the DPI program services were specific and self-contained enough to permit the use of program enrollment lists. In other cases, however, the number of student participants was either too large or too fluid to keep track of. The second complicating factor is the timing of the creation of program enrollment rosters. In the three AIDP schools, program staff identified student participants at three different points in the school year: during the fall term, at the end of the fall term, and near the end of the spring term. In the ten DPP high schools, however, program personnel were not asked to formally identify student participants on enrollment lists until February or March. By this time, some of the schools had removed from their program some students who participated in the fall but were no longer participating -- students who had become long-term absentees (LTAs) or who were discharged from school. In effect, then, there are two different types of enrollment lists: one set which has been largely cleared of long-term absentees or dropouts, and one which includes such students. Clearly, the outcomes for programs using different types of lists would be expected to differ. As it turned out, all of the schools with cleared lists were part of the modified systemic program model; one additional modified systemic school and all of the modified and pure CBO schools had lists that included more LTAs and discharged students. Thus, direct comparisons of student characteristics and outcomes across schools, and particularly across program models, are less valid because different samples of students are represented. Finally, the strength of conclusions which can be drawn from the samples is also weakened by the extent of missing data on many of the relevant variables.

Proportion of the at-risk population served by the Initiative. A total of 4854 students were identified as having participated in the Dropout Prevention Initiative in the 13 high schools, including 2104 who were eligible for the program based on their prior attendance. However, over 8400 students in the 13 schools had prior year attendance rates that made them eligible for dropout prevention program services. Thus, an additional 6357 students were eligible for the program but were not officially enrolled in it, including 3823 eligible ninth and tenth graders. Some of the eligible, unlisted students in the modified systemic schools undoubtedly participated in program-sponsored activities or services; we have created several comparison group samples in order to assess outcomes for such students (described below). Nevertheless, it is clear that the program has been able to specifically target for services less than a third of all eligible students.

Reasons for program eligibility. Program staff identified the criteria under which students were selected as eligible for the program. In the DPP evaluation sample, nearly 40% of the students had 40 or more absences the prior year, and 44% had 20 or more absences the prior spring. Just over 12% were continued in the program because they had participated during 1985-86 but were no longer attendance-eligible; 17% of the students were listed as "at-risk referrals." Twenty-seven percent of the evaluation sample students had failed three or more prior year classes due to cutting, and 4% had been long-term absentees in 1985-86 but were coming to school in the fall of 1986. In the DPP evaluation sample, 917 students (54%) were identified as having met more than one eligibility criterion.

Background characteristics. Of the 1684 DPP and AIDP evaluation sample students, 51% were male and 49% were female. The ages of high school students in the DPP evaluation sample ranged from 13 to 21 years. More than 300 of the students were older than 18; in other words, nearly a fifth of the program students were beyond the expected age of high school completion. Over three-quarters of the evaluation sample students were at least one year older than the expected age for their grade level, and about half of the students were at least two years overage for grade.

Over three-quarters of the evaluation sample students were in the ninth or tenth grades. Nearly half (49%, or 825) had not been promoted to a higher grade at the start of the 1986-87 school year. Of the ninth graders, 530 (63%) were repeating the grade; the same was true for 208 (47%) 10th graders. Just over eight percent of the students were reported to be in special education (compared to overall special education enrollments of 9.2% in the 13 high schools).

Just over seven percent of the students in the evaluation sample were identified as "limited-English proficient." This may well be an underestimate, since 14% of the students responding to a survey administered by the evaluation project reported that they preferred speaking a language other than English with their friends, and 29% said they spoke a language other than English most of the time at home.

Standardized reading test scores were available for 52% of the program evaluation sample students. For these students, the average test score was at the 60th percentile, with a range from the 25th to the 99th percentile.

Overall, high school students in the Dropout Prevention Initiative had low rates of attendance during the prior year (1985-86); the average proportion of days present was 70.9%. There were moderate grade-level differences in prior attendance for the full program rosters and evaluation sample students; the average prior year attendance of 9th graders was 67%, compared to 73% for 10th graders, 78% for 11th graders, 75% for 12th graders, and 68% for special education students. The average prior year attendance for students who were 2 or more years overage for grade was 70%, whereas it was 73% for all other students. The prior year attendance rates for males and females were similar: 70% for males and 71% for females. Average prior year attendance for evaluation sample students in the ten DPP high schools was 71.5%, compared to only 66.2% for the 201 AIDP students in the pure CBO model.

The overall average proportion of courses passed during the prior year for evaluation sample students was 44.5% percent. That is, students in the 1986-87 Dropout Prevention Initiative passed just under half of their courses the prior year. As with attendance, there were grade-level differences in the proportion of prior courses passed. Ninth graders (in the evaluation sample) passed only 39% of their prior year courses, compared to 48% passing rates for 10th graders, 59% for 11th graders, 60% for twelfth graders, and 45% for special education students. Overage students had passed 37% of their prior year courses; students who were the expected age for grade level had passed 51%. Prior course performance for males and females was more disparate than their prior year attendance rates were: males had passed only 39.5% of their prior courses, compared to 44.2% prior courses passed for females. Students in the ten DPP high schools passed on average 45.8% of their prior year courses, while the 201 pure CBO - AIDP students passed only 32.3% of their prior year courses.

Eight of the community-based organizations targeted services to students who were relatively more at risk, on average, than the DPP students overall in their schools. The average prior year attendance rate for students in DPP CBO programs was 71.6%. The four Operation Success programs in the DPP schools averaged 69% prior attendance, a relatively low rate among all CBOs. There was more of a range of prior year courses passed rates among the community-based organizations. Overall, students in the DPP CBOs (excluding the three AIDP schools) passed 44% of their prior year courses, slightly below the rate for program students overall. Operation Success students in the four DPP schools passed on average 42% of their prior year courses. By contrast, the average rate of passing courses of Operation Success students in the pure CBO model in the prior year was 32%.

Characteristics of students in the AIDP school-based programs. As we have indicated above, the 201 AIDP students included in the evaluation of the Dropout Prevention Initiative are those served only by the CBO (Operation Success) in their schools. However, many more students were part of the AIDP programs in the three schools -- specifically, 1147 who received both school and CBO services, and 88 who received school services only. These additional students are a type of comparison group, against which the performance of the students in the Dropout Prevention Initiative can be understood. Their prior year average attendance rate was 70%, essentially the same as that for students in the DPI evaluation sample. Their prior rate of passing courses was only 38%, quite a bit below the DPI rate of 44.5%, but higher than that for the pure CBO students in the same schools.

Program Services to Students

Because students could enter and leave the program at varying points in the school year, and because they had access to a range of different services and service providers, there was much room for variation in students' experiences in the Dropout Prevention Initiative.

Length of participation. Overall, 79% of the targeted high school students in the evaluation sample were reported to have entered the program in the Fall, 1986, school term, with rates ranging from 63% to 91% in the various schools. Over 80% of the ninth graders were enrolled in the program in the fall term; this was a higher proportion than for any other grade level except 12th grade, and is somewhat remarkable given that schools frequently reported problems in the early identification of incoming ninth graders who were at-risk and/or eligible for the program. The majority of students for whom data were available (60.7%) were enrolled in the program for over eight months, and another third (32.7%) were enrolled for 4 to 7 months.

CBO vs. school-based services. In the ten DPP high schools, 1520 students were reported as having participated in CBO programs; these students were 44% of the full program rosters. By contrast, 86% of the students in the modified systemic model were listed as having received school-based services. No students in the modified CBO model were reported to have received school-based services, but we believe this to be a coding error, since all schools sponsored either a transitional class or a GED program. All 201 students in the AIDP pure CBO model were, of course, served by the CBO alone.

Service logs. The high school service log was developed by the evaluation team to try to capture the extent to which Dropout Prevention Program services reached students. Service providers -- school and CBO personnel working in the project -- were asked to keep a record of their contacts with all students, whether targeted or not, for three two-week periods during the year. There were several weaknesses in this data collection effort: it was easier to record student participation in some activities than in others; not all service providers completed the logs; and it was sometimes as difficult to decide which systemic services should be included as it was to determine which students were served by systemic services. Nevertheless, some aspects of program service delivery were revealed through the logs.

The numbers of service providers working in the Dropout Prevention Initiative differed widely from school to school, ranging from ten to sixty-five, and totaling about four hundred in all. Using the two-week December reporting period alone, the highest number of staff-student contacts reported by a school was 6145, while the lowest was 486. Fully 91 percent of all December contacts in one school had a guidance and counseling focus, while in another school the figure was only 9 percent. The major focus of guidance and counseling contacts varied from school to school, with cutting, grade advisement, and vocational education being those most frequently reported in December, and vocational education and personal counseling being reported most frequently in March.

Attendance outreach contacts in December represented from 71 percent to 2 percent of all contacts in a given school; alternative education contacts were reported as 88 percent of all contacts in one school, while another school reported no alternative education contacts in December. Contacts which focused on jobs programs were fairly high in half of the schools - ranging from 56.2 percent to 11.1 percent - while in the remaining schools such activities were negligible.

In four schools, we were able to assess with some degree of accuracy the average number of contacts per student. In each school there was a pattern of a few students receiving large numbers of contacts and the vast majority of students being contacted or served only once or twice during the sample reporting periods. The activity for which multiple contacts were recorded was usually an alternative education group. Although it must be cautioned that the service logs sampled only six weeks of the school year, still there was little evidence of a continuous case management approach for the majority of program students.

One part of the service log was used to measure the extent to which programs were oriented to students' own initiatives for involvement in the program, particularly for guidance and counseling services. The percentage of all contacts in December reported as having been initiated by students ranged from 55.5 to 4.1, and in March the figures were much the same, lying between 39.4 and 4.4.

There were no consistencies within program models in the proportions of specific services provided to students, or in the number of service providers or the total number of staff-student contacts. The ratio of CBO to school staff also was not consistent with the models designations.

Program Outcomes

A variety of comparisons and regression analyses were carried out. Students whose prior year absences were high had a substantially reduced chance of being discharged as a dropout during the program year if they were targeted for dropout prevention services than if they were not targeted for these services. However, the attendance of the students who were targeted for services and not discharged continued to decline at about the same rate as the attendance of similarly eligible students who were not targeted for services and not discharged. Data are not available to make a similar comparison for courses passed, but only students in the AIDP school-based program outside of DPI substantially improved their rate of passing courses over the prior year. Even these last students, however, passed courses at a far lower rate than would be necessary to graduate from high school within the conventional timeframe. The details of these findings are summarized below.

Attendance. The average attendance in Year Two (1986-87) for targeted students in the ten DPP high schools was 64%, compared with 71% in the prior year. Results differed systematically for schools which had cleared their lists of targeted students, i. e., removed names of students who were discharged or LTA as of mid-year, and schools which had not cleared their lists. For the cleared schools, the average attendance of targeted students in Year Two dropped six percent (-6%), while for the uncleared schools it fell eleven percent (-11%). Eleven percent might be a better estimate of the average attendance loss for targeted students in the DPP as a whole.

[As reported in the Final Report for Year One, in Year One of the DPP, 1985-86, the average attendance of targeted students in the ten high schools was 63%, compared to their prior year attendance of 72% in 1984-85. For the students for whom data were available in both years, the attendance loss in Year One was ten percent (-10%).]

Thirty-five percent (35%) of the Year Two targeted students overall improved their attendance between 1985-86 and 1986-87. This fell short of the Chancellor's goal of 50% of targeted students improving attendance.

Courses passed. The average rate of passing courses for all targeted students in the ten DPP schools was 42% in 1986-87 and had been 46% in the prior year. For the uncleared schools, the loss was minus nine percent (-9%), while for the cleared schools the loss was minus four percent (-4%). An accurate average attendance change for the DPP as a whole might be closer to minus nine percent than minus four percent.

[In Year One of the Dropout Prevention Initiative (1985-86), the average student passed 35% of their courses, had passed 37% of courses in the prior year (1984-85), and in the subsample that had data for both years lost nine percent (-9%) of courses between Year One and the prior year.]

Forty three percent (43%) of the targeted DPP students who had previously failed at least one course improved their percent of courses passed in 1986-87 compared to the prior year. This approached, but fell short of the Chancellor's goal of 50%.

Dropouts. Thirteen percent (13%) of the targeted students in the full roster sample for the ten DPP high schools in 1986-87 were discharged as dropouts during the year. The dropout discharge rate for the uncleared schools was about twice the rate for the cleared schools, so again the actual rate for the DPP overall was probably higher than thirteen percent. When the analysis considers just the targeted students who were eligible for services on the basis of prior year absences, twenty-one percent (21%) were discharged as dropouts during 1986-87. By contrast, of the students in the DPI and AIDP schools who were eligible on the basis of prior absences and who were not targeted for services, thirty-nine percent (39%) were discharged as dropouts in 1986-87. (See below for definition of these comparison groups.)

Comparisons with other students. We selected comparison groups of 100 randomly chosen attendance-eligible but non-targeted students in each of the DPI schools. In each of the three DPI service delivery models -- modified systemic, modified CBO, and pure CBO -- targeted program students who were attendance-eligible and who were not discharged as dropouts during the year had attendance losses that were about the same or greater than the losses for the comparison groups of non-targeted students. Only the students in the three AIDP schools who received school-based services (with or without CBO services) appear to have attendance results that were higher than the outcomes for eligible but non-targeted students. In addition, only these students substantially improved their average proportion of courses passed above the estimated rates for attendance-eligible but non-targeted students.

Attendance-eligible, non-targeted students in the six modified systemic schools were expected to experience some "trickle-down" effects of systemic program services in their schools. However, we found that, in a random sample of these students, they were discharged as dropouts in 1986-87 at almost the same rate (37%) as the average rate of 39% for the non-targeted attendance-eligible students in all 36 of the DPI and AIDP high schools. Likewise, their changes in attendance did not differ from the rates for other comparison groups (-5% for all).

Grades were not available for a sufficient sample of nontargeted students outside the modified systemic schools. The nontargeted but attendance-eligible students in the modified systemic schools had about the same loss of courses passed (estimated -5%) as the loss for the targeted attendance-eligible students in the modified CBO schools (-4%). This might indicate some trickle-down effect, but overall the effect on students who were eligible on the basis of previous low attendance but who were not explicitly targeted for services in the modified systemic schools appears to be negligible.

Regression analyses to examine the relative effectiveness of the ten DPP schools established that one school was clearly less successful than the others, but did not identify any school that was unambiguously more successful than the others, for either attendance or courses passed. There were only a few striking differences between the outcomes for individual schools and the CBOs who worked with them.

Outcomes for students with different characteristics. The evaluation has found a number of different patterns of attendance and passing courses for students with different characteristics. Some of these findings are summarized below.

Targeted students whose attendance had improved in the prior year and who were therefore not attendance-eligible in 1986-87 still lost some attendance and courses passed, but not as much as targeted students overall.

Students who were listed as having met no criteria had a smaller attendance loss than would be expected, and gained in courses passed, suggesting that the program was effective for them.

Losses in courses passed were particularly sharp for students entering the ninth and tenth grades from the middle schools, while students repeating these grades tended not to have further losses; this strongly points to the need for better articulation of the curriculum between the middle schools and the high schools.

Students whose age was close to the age expected for their grade lost as much attendance and lost more in courses passed than students who were two years or more older than expected for their grade. This probably relates to the trauma experienced by students their first year in high school.

Male students lost more ground than females in courses passed, despite the fact that males attended school at the same rate as females; this points to the need to focus on the in-school behavior of males and teachers' reactions to it.

Students who had been absent more than 40 days the prior year had an average loss of 5% in attendance, while students who had been absent 40 days or less the prior year had an average loss of 13% in attendance. This is explained partly in terms of regression to the mean, but it also shows that the program's overall attendance loss is not simply accounted for by students with previously low attendance.

Students who had failed 40% or more of their courses in the prior year had a substantial gain in courses passed, and students who had failed less than 40% the prior year had a large loss in courses.

Few former LTAs were identified, but these students had greater losses of attendance and courses passed than the program average, and greater than would be expected from the standpoint of the usual regression to the mean for students with very low prior year statistics.

Finally, students whose scores on the Degrees of Reading Power test were in the middle range of percentiles did no better in average proportion of courses passed (41%) or change over the previous year (-12%) than students with lower scores (40%, -10%), while students with high DRP percentile scores still passed only 56% of their courses and lost six percent (-6%) from the previous year. Reading ability, then, is far from a sufficient explanation for why students are receiving the grades they get.

School-wide outcomes. Looking at school-wide changes, more schools decreased (eight) than increased (five) the percent of LTAs in the total school population in 1986-87 over the previous year. Only two of the thirteen DPI schools had any loss of full roster attendance between the two years, and neither of these was a school that decreased its percent of LTAs. Dropout discharges declined in eight of the thirteen schools. These patterns were not related to service models.

The frequency of suspensions for "aggressive acts by pupils against other pupils" declined between 1984-85 and 1986-87 in the DPP schools; the decline was dramatic in six schools, five of which had a CBO-sponsored conflict mediation program.

All but one of the DPP high schools showed decreases in the number of serious incidents reported between 1984-85 and 1986-87 -- the one exception being also the school which had the greatest loss in attendance and courses passed among the ten DPP schools.

All in all, no program, model, or school has achieved a comprehensive improvement, but much is being learned that could be brought to fruition. The most positive effect on the attendance and courses passed of targeted students directly in Year Two was demonstrated by the AIDP school-based program, which had a stronger instructional and scheduling strategy than any of the three DPI models (though the latter include programs like a minischool whose effects have not yet been specifically measured).

Attendance-eligible targeted students in the modified systemic and modified CBO models, but not the pure CBO model, were substantially less likely to be discharged as dropouts than eligible but nontargeted students in the same schools or in the AIDP schools. However, in all of the models and the school-based AIDP program, the students were passing courses at less than half the rate that would be required to complete a high school education in three or four years. How many of these students, or students like them who are now in the elementary and middle grades, will in fact graduate depends upon both program and school-wide changes that are even now only in the developmental stage. The reduced numbers of serious incidents and of discharges for peer aggression might be forerunners of these changes, along with certain areas of staff growth that the Year Three final report will describe. Though they are "systemic," these changes are not simply identified with the systemic schools as such. One dimension of development is how staff, students, families, and community work together. Another is the course of study, not only its content and method, but the arrangements that allow students to pursue their education in a different timeframe from the one that has previously prevailed. The findings for different kinds of students indicate different problems that need to be solved.

Results of the High School Student Survey

In late Spring, 1987, a survey was administered to 794 high school students, representing less than forty percent of the intended random sample of targeted students in the DPI high schools. On the average, the respondents were systematically different from the nonrespondents. Respondents were improving their attendance and course performance during Year Two, while nonrespondents' attendance and courses passed were falling. The survey results, therefore, are likely to present a relatively optimistic picture of the students' school and home situations.

Forty-four percent (44%) of the respondents described themselves as black or Afro-American, and nearly the same proportion (39%) said they were Hispanic or Spanish. An additional 4% described themselves as Asian-American or Pacific Islander. Only 4% of the respondents described themselves as white; 9% chose "other" as a descriptor.

About two-fifths (41%) reported living in a home with two parents or guardians, while the other 59% lived with either a male parent but no female parent (5%), no parent (7%), or a female parent but no male parent (48%). There frequently were other adults living in the home. Many respondents did not know how much schooling their parents had acquired; of those who did, almost one-quarter (24%) said that their father, stepfather or male guardian had completed some college, while 38% said he had not completed high school; and 27% reported some college for their mother, stepmother or female guardian, while 38% said she had not completed high school.

Most of the respondents were ninth or tenth graders and many were one or two years overage for grade. The vast majority (82%) had worked for pay (not counting work around the house), and one quarter were working for pay at the time of the survey. About 46% of those students who reported working during the school year were working at least 20 hours per week.

Only 9% of these students think that they will fail to complete high school. Almost two-thirds (63%) expect to obtain some further schooling after high school, and 38% believe that they will finish college or obtain even more schooling than that. Whether these expectations are unrealistic in view of the generally low rates of completion of a high school education in the New York City public schools, or whether the expectations are functional for this subset of targeted students which is in fact improving its performance in high school, is an important question to pursue further.

Many students reported that their schools were the scene of violence. Most of this violent activity involved conflict among students, but some also included teachers or other adults in the schools. The majority of respondents (53%) said that they were never afraid that someone would hurt or bother them at school, about a quarter (23%) said that they were afraid sometimes or most of the time, and just 6% said that this was a problem most of the time. The respondents followed a very similar pattern when describing how often they were afraid that someone would hurt or bother them on the way to or from school.

Three-quarters of the respondents said that at least some of the time there was so much noise in the hall that they could not keep their minds on class, and about a fifth said that this was almost always the case. There were similar responses to an item indicating that there was so much noise in class that the teacher could not teach.

Most of the respondents said that their teachers almost never thought they were slow learners. Students had mixed views of whether their teachers treated them with respect, really listened to what they had to say, and cared about them. Forty-four percent (44%) of the respondents claimed that their principal almost never got out of the office and talked with the students.

Many of the respondents had received an attendance incentive, and the vast majority said this was a positive experience. A majority of the respondents said they received some kind of individualized or group counseling, but in most cases it was sporadic.

The students' reports suggest that there not firm linkages between the intermediate or junior high schools they attended and the high schools in which they eventually enrolled. About two-thirds (64%) reported feeling confused and unsure when they first entered the high school. Almost two-thirds (63%) indicated that a teacher or counselor explained school rules or procedures to them when they first came to their high school; almost half (46%) said that older students helped them learn about the school; and 28% reported that there was no one to talk to.

Among these respondents, relatively few reported that they had missed any school because their family moved away for a while (12%) or because of work (16%). Larger proportions had missed at least one day because they had to take care of someone at home (33%) or because of problems at home (36%), but very few said that they missed more than ten days of school for these reasons. The most common reasons for missing at least one day of school were illness (72%), not feeling like going to school (54%), and wanting to do something with friends (38%).

When asked what the school does when students are absent many days, the respondents most often said that the school sends a letter (86%). About half (47%) said that the school requests a parental visit, and under a quarter (22%) said that someone from the school visits their home. Few students reported an unpleasant response from school staff when they came back to class. Most students reported that when they returned to class after a long absence, they received help in catching up on missed work. Just five percent (5%) said that they didn't need help to catch up, and 23% said that they received no help and just fell behind.

Over 90% of the respondents reported liking to go to at least half of their classes. However, nearly half claimed that they don't enjoy the work they do in class, and more than half complained that they didn't get to learn about things they were interested in during their classes. Half of the respondents (49%) felt that they never got the grades they deserved no matter how hard they tried, nearly half (45%) thought that their schoolwork was not very good most of the time, and less than half (47%) responded "nearly always" or "most of the time" to a question asking how often they were very happy when in school.

The respondents, it will be remembered, were gaining in attendance and courses passed in 1986-87 compared with 1985-86. Perhaps they were less vulnerable to the negative feelings or forces that they reported than were the students who were not present in school to respond to the survey. Perhaps, too, the variations in the responses that we did obtain correlated with the respondents' performance in 1986-87. Further analysis is being conducted to examine this last possibility.

Program Budgets and Costs

The total 1986-87 DPI allocation was $9,325,674 for the 13 high schools and $349,291 for central program management, bringing the high school DPI budget total to $9,674,965. Public funding for DPI in Year Two came from three primary sources: reimbursable funds through the state's AIDP program, the city's special 0832 tax levy for the Dropout Prevention Initiative, and the city's regular school tax levy. The relative total contributions were $2,935,955 (30%) from state AIDP; $6,359,338 (66%) from the city's special DPI tax levy; and $379,673 (4%) from the regular school tax levy.

Program budgets in the modified systemic schools ranged from $677,6050 to $1,100,637; the range in the pure and modified CBO schools was from a low of $404,506 to a high of $750,149.

In general, the allocations for 1986-87 were based on incremental increases over Year One budgets, with some discretionary adjustments based on schools' plans for Year Two activities. The Year One budgets had been associated with (if not strictly based on) estimates of the number of at-risk students in each school. There were large discrepancies between initial estimates of the at-risk population in each school and the number of attendance-eligible students found on school registers in 1986-87. Seven schools were found to have over 200 more attendance-eligible students in 1986-87 than their initial estimates indicated, and one school had almost 300 fewer. Overall, the size of the eligible population in a given school was generally not reflected in the size of the school's DPI budget.

Federation Employment and Guidance Service (FEGS) received the largest CBO allocations for its Operation Success and Operation Futures programs, ranging from $183,195 in one school to $510,330 at another. The size of the budgets for the other CBOs ranged from $15,525 to $229,900.

Across all four DPI models, the schools were budgeted for a total of $5,488,840 (59%), while the 13 CBOs were funded at a level of $3,836,834 (41%). FEGS received approximately 71% of the total amount budgeted for CBOs.

According to central Board of Education school budget reports, DPI unit allocations varied from three percent to almost ten percent of total school budgets; OTPS allocations from DPI represented from seven percent to over 37 percent of schools' non-personnel resources. These are not trivial levels of funding; however, they cannot be construed as providing enough resources for comprehensive school improvements.

Out of an overall budget of $9,674,965, an estimated $8,439,284 was spent on school and CBO programming and $464,109 on central DPP administration, for a total of $8,903,393. As was the case with their budgets, the total school costs ran highest in the pure and modified systemic programs. Schools varied somewhat by model in the degree to which they were able to spend their budgets and presumably mount full-scale programs. The schools originally designated as in the pure systemic and pure CBO models ranged from 92% to 100% in school spending rates, while the schools in the original modified systemic and modified CBO models had a little more difficulty, averaging 84% and 79%, respectively. The CBOs were more successful than the schools in spending their budgets, with spending rates across all models ranging from 92% to 99%.

Recommendations

At this point in time, following three years of creative experimenting with different models and components of dropout prevention, it is necessary for the Board of Education and program planners to exercise some strong priorities. This is advised despite the fact that the Year Three outcome data are just now being prepared for analysis, but with a certain confidence that patterns which have been found for the program so far will hold up for Year Three.

To begin, it is important to distinguish between the goal of demonstrating the possibility of a substantial gain for students targeted for dropout prevention and the goal of schoolwide improvement. These goals need to be pursued simultaneously. However, to accomplish the first, resources that are already available in the school or the program need to be concentrated for a selected group of students, in order to affect students immediately. To accomplish the second, a more long-range, developmental plan needs to be set in motion. If it takes the commitment of all a school's best resources to achieve gains for targeted students, the only way to achieve gains for the school overall is to develop -- not just apply -- more resources.

Neither of these goals has been achieved to date, but actions in both directions can build upon elements of the Dropout Prevention Program that have already been implemented. These elements need to be organized in a more intensive way to meet the first objective and in a more deliberately growth-producing way to meet the second. Even as we write this, planning for Year Four of the DPI is underway, so what is at issue here is not the general will to change but clarity about the directions change should take.

To demonstrate the possibility of a substantial gain for students targeted for dropout prevention, the program needs to be intense, comprehensive, and sustained. At this time, the gains found in the school-based program in the three AIDP schools included in the DPI (and possibly in some components of the DPP schools that are still being analyzed) suggest that a strong instructional program needs to be combined with the various support components that the DPP has emphasized. This strategy should allow teachers to adapt curriculum to the students' needs in ways that foster their own engagement as well; it should provide for closer monitoring of student progress, and for more positive patterns of support among students and between students and teachers. Teachers should be selected who have already demonstrated positive approaches to at-risk students. Flexible scheduling, increased counseling, part-time jobs, career education, and tutoring might all be necessary to the success of many students in a targeted program.

At the same time, all students in a school might benefit from an instructional program made more sensitive to the changing needs of student populations. Many school offerings which are standard in other communities but only minimally provided to New York City students, such as industrial arts and fine art programs, music, and extra-curricular activities, should be provided for all interested students, not just for some through a special program. School progress should be closely monitored for all students, not just for some. One-to-one advisory relationships between students and school staff, in which the adult has responsibility and accountability for supporting individual student progress, should be widespread. This can be accomplished through strategies such as the smaller "houses" recently begun for ninth-grade high school students. In general, more comprehensive improvements should be a proliferation of "small approaches," and not a single small approach writ large. The very quality of smallness is often the key to a successful intervention.

The fact that even students who have made substantial gains in courses passed are generally accumulating courses at a rate too low to lead to graduation in the conventional number of years argues for radical adjustments in the calender of school and in the sequences of courses required of students, in order to facilitate their graduation.

Understanding the challenges of these different goals is a first step; it must be followed by a commitment to an appropriate scope for the Dropout Prevention Initiative. Again, schoolwide improvements cannot be achieved simply by applying existing resources differently; new resources must be nurtured. If the program is intended to foster schoolwide change, it should provide resources for extensive staff development, and should allow for much more flexibility in school programming than is currently feasible in most schools. It should have a long enough time frame for schools to put new structures in place, to alter working conditions and responsibilities, and to achieve incremental, long-term goals. Meeting a degree of success with a smaller group of targeted students can be an incentive for larger efforts, but the obstacles to overcome and tasks to complete are not necessarily the same.

We reiterate that both kinds of improvements should be sought simultaneously. The danger in targeting only the most at-risk students is that it might be possible to create an island of effectiveness for them for a while, but sooner or later the larger school context will intrude again. Furthermore, the stigmatization of at-risk students in a small scale approach is not wise -- better to employ many diverse strategies for many different kinds of students. In addition, when quality resources are targeted only for some students, one increases the risk that other students will be provided with less than an optimal education.

Schools should be made aware of the size of their at-risk populations, and should plan an appropriate balance of targeted and systemic strategies for school improvement and dropout prevention. Various analyses in this report have demonstrated that the numbers of at-risk students in these thirteen schools alone are much larger than the program has been able to accomodate thus far. If the schools were stronger, however, fewer students would be judged to be "at risk" -- since risk, specifically attendance, is a product of both the sensitivity or vulnerability of the student and the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the school itself.

School (and CBO) staff in the schools must be empowered to take charge of school improvement, whether on a large or a small scale. They should, however, continually evaluate their initiatives against goals for students. Students themselves must be empowered, by their being listened to, having more options that they value, and playing a significant part in planning their school careers. Shared control needs to obtain between the central Board of Education and the local schools, and equally between staff and students. Control at one level needs to be a model for control at another level.

Staff development needs to occur on a much larger scale than it does now. A more relevant curriculum, more responsive teaching, cross cultural awareness, and general staff advisement of students all require major staff development efforts.

Parent and community participation in schools should be promoted for the benefit of all students. Collaboration with all types of neighborhood groups can be a key ingredient.

School environments should be made more safe, attractive, and appealing for students. Dangerous or neglected facilities send a powerful message of disrespect to students, and to staff as well.

Since "dropout prevention" implies something negative about students and schools, the focus of any intervention program should be defined more positively so that participants can be comfortable or even proud to identify with it. As with many of our recommendations, there are efforts in this direction in some of the schools.

Dropout prevention programs need the active leadership and support of principals. Principals of schools with dropout prevention programs should continue to be involved in program design and planning and in program monitoring and review. They should be held accountable to one another for the overall success of the program. This can be fostered through regular meetings which focus on program impact and results.

Program facilitation and technical assistance should continue to be provided from a central level office. The purpose should be to cut red tape and strengthen local initiatives, skills, and accountability, not to ensure compliance.

Individual-level progress should be aggregated to provide feedback directly to program staff about the overall effectiveness of the program. Schools may need technical assistance from the central Board in this area, especially regarding the use of micro-computers to monitor services and student progress.

Virtually all of the high schools in the Dropout Prevention Initiative have an image among students as a dumping ground. The schools need to work with their feeder schools and community groups to create themes that will enable positive resources to be concentrated in each school.

Linkage programs between middle schools and high schools should be of two varieties: those designed to attract students to specific (neighborhood) high schools, and those designed to facilitate all students' transitions into high school. The Board should consider radical solutions to the problem of students' transition from middle school to high school, including enabling more at-risk students to get into their schools of first choice, and having students spend a week or more in their new schools before the spring term ends in June. To stretch the limits of this, one can even imagine having the initial registration and introduction to new courses for all students take place in June, when except for examinations students' school activity has virtually come to a halt. School-level linkages should be approached within a framework of long-range, future-oriented guidance and planning with students. Colleges should be included in this effort at both the middle-school and the high-school levels.

Joint programs with schools, community-based organizations, and other private and public agencies should be supported where they offer the variety of knowledge, skills, and personal and organizational styles needed to address complex social and educational problems.

Community-based organizations should not, however, be used to provide services that are the usual responsibility of the school (e.g., direct instruction or tutoring) unless they develop a significant alternative, such as evening or Saturday sessions, or parent tutoring.

An important feature of school-CBO collaboration has been that CBOs hire staff members who reflect the ethnic/racial diversity of the students. The ability of CBO staff to speak Spanish with students and their families is an asset, and they often provide positive role models for students. Successful collaboration depends on full, stable program staffing. To ensure strong student-staff relations, CBO staff should be expected to serve in their positions for a full academic year, much as school personnel do. Mid-year transfers between schools should be discouraged, and CBOs should be able to compensate staff members adequately enough to promote stability.

Program directors should explore the possibility of using community-based organizations to enhance parent involvement in schools. Many of the existing CBO offices in schools function as "safe havens" for students; they can possibly do the same for parents.

While CBOs should be encouraged to develop services that draw on their special areas of expertise, the schools and CBOs should together negotiate and agree upon the specific services to be offered and the channels of communication through which the academic program and the support services are to be integrated.

Students' needs and the needs of the schools are much larger than the Dropout Prevention Initiative at this time. However, many elements of an appropriate response to these needs have been implemented in the program. The DPI has produced information that can be applied to problems more comprehensively than has been possible in the school system so far. Pursuing the dual objectives of long-range schoolwide improvement and a short-range demonstration, within each school, of the possibility of substantial gains for at-risk students should build upon the resources developed in the program in its first three years.

APPENDIX E

EVALUATION OF THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

FINAL REPORT ON THE MIDDLE SCHOOLS FOR YEAR THREE, 1987-88

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Teachers College Dropout Prevention Initiative Evaluation

1987-88 Final Report
Part One: Middle Schools

Executive Summary

In its first three years, the middle school Dropout Prevention Program has shown a greater capacity to employ auxilliary staff and implement attendance outreach, counseling, and alternative education services than to improve students' attendance and percent of courses passed. Analysis of the data for 1987-88 has revealed a number of unintended and unwanted results. Positive outcomes in a few schools suggest directions for change. Overall, the results demonstrate the need for a major reconfiguration of the dropout prevention effort. This process may already have begun, as preliminary information from this evaluation has been used to draw up guidelines for 1989-90.

Program Implementation

1. In 1987-88, the Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) was implemented for the third year in 29 middle schools. (The DPP is a part of the larger New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative, or DPI.) In 18 of the schools services were provided entirely by Board of Education (BOE) staff--the School-Alone (SA) model; and in 11 schools programs were staffed by both BOE and community based organization (CBO) personnel--the CBO model.

2. The largest numbers of services recorded on Monthly Summary of Service Reports (MSSRs) were in the areas of telephone and mail. In a (relatively) high middle range were extended day, individual student guidance, home visits, student conferences, and group guidance. Relatively few attendance incentives were recorded, while high school linkage, parent guidance, health record review, vision screening, hearing screening, and physical examination were all in a very low range.

3. The monthly averages of services tended to be highest between January and March, lower between September and December, and lowest between April and June. This timing of services seemed to be geared more to BOE priorities than to students' needs.

4. A Pupils with Compensatory Education Needs (PCEN) program of remedial instruction in reading, mathematics, and/or writing was implemented in 27 of the schools. From a funding standpoint, PCEN was not a DPP component. However, it was the vehicle used to fulfill a requirement that there be an alternative education

component in the DPP. Selection and programming of eligible students, appointments of teachers, securing appropriate materials, and approvals of budgets for PCEN absorbed much of the energy of school staffs and the Office of Student Progress (OSP), and was not completed until November or later in half of the schools. Enrichment courses complemented the PCEN courses in eleven schools.

5. Students who were clustered (programmed together) for PCEN remedial instruction and/or enrichment classes received substantially more services than students who were not clustered. For direct services to students who were present in school, this reflected the fact that it was easier to access students who were clustered. For indirect services, largely attendance outreach, the finding may reflect a greater commitment to students who were better known because they were scheduled for classes together.

6. The pattern of clustered students receiving more services than not-clustered students applied equally in the CBO and the SA schools, suggesting that CBO and SA staff accessed students very similarly.

7. Pupil Personnel Committees (PPC) functioned in all 29 schools and in many of the schools were appraised by staff as very valuable for planning interventions for students. However, PPC decision sheets showed that students' deficient attendance and academic performance were attributed almost exclusively to home, health and pregnancy or child-care, discipline and personal problems, rather than to problems in the academic program and teaching of the schools themselves.

8. The Office of Student Progress conducted a very thorough monitoring and documentation of the implementation of the program. The development of an Incentive Point System in all of the schools combined general OSP guidelines with school-level discretion in a way that demonstrated the potential for mutual decision making. OSP's intention to develop alternative education in a similar way was subverted by New York State's late and narrow specification of PCEN requirements. OSP's monitoring of attendance outreach and guidance and counseling focused more on the schools' recording expected levels of these services than on the relationship between the services and student needs and outcomes.

Characteristics of Students Served

9. A total of 4752 middle school students were enrolled in the Dropout Prevention Program in 1987-88. The average proportion of a school's students enrolled in DPP was 16.3% for the 29 schools overall. The average number of students was 185 for schools in the School-Alone model, and 129 for schools in the CBO model.

10. Slightly more of the students were male (53%) than female (47%). Almost half (48%) of the program students were overage for their grade, probably reflecting the fact that many students had been held back in some prior grade(s).

11. Just over half of the students (53%) were enrolled in the program on the basis of prior year attendance alone. The next most frequently used selection criterion was "principal's discretion" (11%).

12. The average prior year (1986-87) attendance for students was 77%. The average rate of passing courses in the prior year was 70%, that is, about three and a half out of five courses.

13. Only eight percent of the 4752 program students were listed on Board of Education files as being limited-English proficient (LEP), using the Board's criterion of scoring at or below the twentieth percentile on the Language Assessment Battery in 1986 or 1987. However, an additional three percent had scores between the 21st and the 39th percentiles and another eleven percent had taken at least one standardized test in an alternate language version in 1986 or 1987. Thus 22% of the program students had some indicator of limited or marginal English proficiency.

14. Approximately one-third of the students had one recorded risk characteristic, another 28% had two, 20% had three, and 7% had four.

15. There were large differences between schools in the targeted students' levels of risk on all of the dimensions.

Program Outcomes

16. The average attendance change for program students was -3.4%, the equivalent of a decline in attendance of about 6 days a year. Average attendance fell from 77% in 1986-87 to 74% in 1987-88. This is about the same as a -2.9% loss that has been found for a control group of 2285 students who were located in the same 29 schools in 1987-88 and who were eligible for services on the basis of prior low attendance but were not enrolled in the DPP.

17. Overall, 47% of the program students improved their attendance, with an average improvement (for these students) of +9.4%.

18. The average change in proportion of courses passed was +1.8%, the equivalent of passing about one-tenth of a course more in a year. The average proportion of courses passed by program students was 70% in 1986-87, and 73% in 1987-88. (The numbers do not correspond exactly because students missing data for one year or the other are not included in the change score.)

19. Of those students who had failed at least one course in 1986-87, 63% met the program objective of passing more courses the following year. The average change for these students was +40%, or about two courses per year. Of *all* students in the program, 37% passed more courses in 1987-88 than they had the previous year, 32% passed fewer, and 31% stayed the same. Overall, the program may have prevented a further deterioration of courses passed.

20. These results for Year Three of the Dropout Prevention Program were more like the results for Year One than Year Two and thus indicate that the program did not have a positive trajectory. Much stronger gains, especially in courses passed, would be required to improve students' long-term chances of completing their education.

21. Students who received PCEN reading instruction had gains on the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) Test that were higher than expected for middle school students and higher than the gains for students who did not have PCEN reading.

22. Students who had PCEN mathematics remediation in combination with reading or writing, but *not* students who had mathematics remediation alone, gained more on the Mathematics Achievement Test (MAT) than students who did not have mathematics remediation.

23. Students who had PCEN and/or enrichment had better attendance and courses passed outcomes than students who had neither of these courses. However, regression analyses established that differences in the attendance of the various groups in September, before the remediation and enrichment programs were implemented in most of the schools, accounted for the variance in outcomes. The remediation and enrichment programs selected students who were more available in the early fall, and did not alter their attendance patterns, even though these students received more program services than other students did. There is no evidence that the PCEN or enrichment classes themselves had any effect on attendance or courses passed.

24. Early current year attendance added significantly and substantially to the prediction of later current year attendance and courses passed after controlling for prior year attendance or courses passed. The attendance of every group of students was highest in September (85.2% overall) and declined regularly, month by month until February, when it picked up some with the start of the new semester. Personal and home problems alone would not account for these systematic declines.

25. In a given month, direct services were given slightly more frequently to students with better attendance, while indirect

services (i. e., attendance outreach) went to students with low attendance. Student attendance in one month was highly correlated with attendance the following month; for program students overall, neither direct nor indirect services appeared to have any impact on this pattern.

26. There was no difference for students in the School-Alone model and those in the CBO model on attendance; both had an average attendance change of -3.4%. The average change in proportion of courses passed was +2.8% for schools in the School-Alone model, and -0.3% for schools in the CBO model. All of the difference is accounted for by students in the School-Alone model who received enrichment classes. In enrolling more students, the SA model particularly enrolled more students whose prior achievement, especially higher test scores, contributed to 1987-88 courses passed.

26. Outcomes differed by district. In the highest achieving district, all three schools provided enrichment classes for program students, and two of the three had very high parent involvement.

27. Individual schools had average attendance changes that ranged from -9% to +3% and average changes in courses passed that ranged from -11% to +28%.

28. The school with the highest outcome in courses passed also had the third highest attendance change. This school had also shown strong gains, relative to the other schools, in the second year of the program. The dropout prevention program in this school was characterized by several important features: all DPP students were block-programmed; the DPP fostered a strong career education program; teachers and DPP staff ate lunch together every day; program staff kept very close track of students' attendance throughout the school day; and the program involved large numbers of parents in dinners and health workshops.

29. Another school that had positive attendance and courses passed outcomes in year Three had steadily improved its ranking for both outcomes during the three years of the DPP. The Pupil Personnel Records from this school evidenced a problem solving approach to the implementation of program, particularly to increase attendance in a homework helper program.

30. A school which had the largest attendance gain of all 29 schools in both 1986-87 and 1987-88 had major changes in its DPP program between the two years but in each year created channels for positive attendance outreach to students. These included a strong incentives program, especially trips, in year Two and a strong PCEN mathematics program in which all DPP students were enrolled in Year Three. The school's average gain on the MAT was the highest for DPP students in any of the 29 schools.

31. Male and female students had virtually the same attendance rates but males passed substantially fewer of their courses than females. These results, together with a pattern of different issues being discussed for male and female students in PPC meetings, show strong differences in expectations and performances by students' sex.

32. Students who met the BOE criteria for limited English proficiency had an average attendance decline of -4.1% and an increase in courses passed of +8.1%. However, students identified by expanded LEP criteria (see above #13) had an average attendance loss of -5.3% and a loss in courses passed of -0.3%. It is likely that the difference in courses passed is attributable to the schools' provision of special language instruction services for officially eligible students.

Middle School Program Costs

33. Total costs for the middle school Dropout Prevention Program during 1987-88 were $4,692,801. When fringe benefit costs are excluded from the total (because they were not included in the 1986-87 analysis), total costs show an increase of 8.4% over 1986-87 expenditures.

34. Average district-level expenditures were $443,383 for districts in the School-Alone model, and $508,126 for districts in the CBO model. Per-pupil costs averaged $798 per pupil in the School-Alone model and $1,432 per pupil in the CBO model.

35. There was no relationship between program costs and performance outcomes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

36. CBOs adapted to school operating procedures to gain access to students in school, but in doing so they may not have been relating to students in the same way that they would in their own or a different setting. While two CBO schools achieved relatively high attendance gains, it cannot be said overall, qualitatively or quantitatively, that community-based agencies made either a positive or a negative contribution to dropout prevention efforts.

37. Although the program has attempted to provide alternative instruction through remediation and enrichment add-ons, it does not acknowledge the need for a comprehensive restructuring of students' school experiences, and therefore has not yet addressed the central curriculum issue.

38. The schools should strive to have fundamentally positive communications with students and their families. DPP staff in

each school should review their attendance outreach functions and parent participation activities and concentrate on those that seem to result in the most positive interactions. Teachers should look for opportunities for positive communications with students and their families.

39. Given that students' highest rate of attendance is in September and that attendance early in the year is highly predictive of attendance and courses passed later in the year, the schools must be ready to welcome students with an engaging program and supportive services from the beginning of the school year in September.

40. Schools should modify their instructional programs to accomodate students' perceptions of the instruction that they find most helpful to them for learning. Observations and interviews of students suggest that these practices include a combination of direct instruction and hands-on activity, with teachers taking time to explain things patiently to students.

41. The schools need to take much stronger measures to facilitate middle school students' orientation to high schools. High school orientation needs to be integrated more closely with students' planning for their futures, beginning early in the middle grades.

42. Schools need to assess the adequacy of their counseling and health resources, both to rationalize the best use of the resources they already have, directly or through referral, and to inform city and state authorities of the needs of students in the schools.

43. Schools need to decide what information about student performance and services to students will best aid them in reaching dropout prevention goals. The Board of Education should work with the schools to develop ways of obtaining and updating this information. Advisory and coordinating roles need to be expanded for teachers, and more tax-levy teachers need to be included on Pupil Personnel Committees.

44. Given that program budgets were much higher in schools using CBOs, while target populations were smaller and outcomes were not better for students in CBO schools, student enrollment and service delivery goals for schools collaborating with CBOs should be reviewed.

45. Central and borough or district Board of Education personnel should share expertise and decision-making power with local school personnel in all of these matters. Long- and short-range goals must be set within a framework of mutual respect and accountability.

APPENDIX F

EVALUATION OF THE NEW YORK CITY DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

FINAL REPORT ON THE HIGH SCHOOLS FOR YEAR THREE, 1987-88

PART ONE: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

by

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Evaluation of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative

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Final Report on the High Schools for Year Three, 1987-88

Executive Summary

During 1987-88, the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative (DPI) was in its third year of implementation in ten high schools comprising the Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) and three high schools from the Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention Program (AIDP). By this time, the Initiative was expected to have developed to a point where it was having a clear impact on students' attendance and rate of passing courses. The Teachers College evaluation of the Initiative has found that the program was falling far short of the goals that had been set for it. This general conclusion is consistent with a similar conclusion reached by the Board of Education's own evaluation of the parallel AIDP, which included 23 high schools in addition to the three that were a part of the DPI.

Teachers College has also identified specific situations where progress was made toward achieving program goals in individual schools. The findings argue for increased school-based planning in the further development of the dropout prevention effort.

Students in the DPI high school program

The DPI targeted 4781 students for services in the thirteen participating high schools in 1987-88. A majority of the students were selected for the program because of meeting one or more of the eligibility criteria of 40 or more absences the prior year, 20 or more absences the prior spring, and/or having failed three or more courses the prior year due to excessive cutting. Eighty-five percent of the evaluation sample students were at least one year older than the expected age for their grade level. These were indeed students for whom the schools have not been working.

The evaluation made up comparison samples of students who were eligible on the basis of the attendance criteria but who had not been targeted for services in the DPI. The number of students at risk of dropping out but not targeted for services was considerably greater than the number that the program was able to enroll.

Program services

Three program models were implemented during Year Three: a modified systemic model, with the bulk of funding used for school-wide improvements and some funds for CBO-sponsored services (6 schools); a modified CBO model, with the bulk of funding used for the CBO-sponsored Operation Success program and a moderate amount of funding for school-wide improvements (4 schools); and an AIDP school-with-CBO model, with most funding used for Operation Success, but with substantial participation by tax-levy school staff (three schools). Operation Success was implemented by Federation Employment and Guidance Service (FEGS).

The program was meant to provide activities and services for students in seven areas: facilitation, attendance outreach, guidance and counseling, health, linkage between middle school and high school, alternative education, and security. Attendance outreach, individual and group guidance, alternative education, and, in a more general way, facilitation and security, each involved more than half of the program students. However, the average targeted student did not receive the concentration of services in complementary areas that the program rationale called for.

Student outcomes

Attendance of the students in the DPI overall fell from 69% in 1986-87 to 64% in 1987-88. For the students for whom data for both years were available, the change was -6%. Only 39% of targeted students improved their attendance, while the goal was that a minimum of 50% improve their attendance.

Average percent of courses passed by targeted students fell from 44% in 1986-87 to 42% in 1987-88, a change of -4% for students with two years of data. Just 42% of the students with previous course failures improved their percent of courses passed; the goal was that 50% of these students improve in courses passed. When all targeted students were considered, 36% had gains in percent of courses passed, 15% stayed the same, and 49% had losses in percent of courses passed.

Attendance and courses passed results for targeted students were somewhat better than the outcomes for comparison students who had not been targeted for services in the DPI schools.

Twenty-four percent (24%) of DPI students whose eligiblity for the program was based on previous attendance were discharged as dropouts in 1987-88, compared to 34% of similarly eligible but not-targeted students in the DPI schools, a difference that could be partly attributed to the relatively stronger attendance of the DPI targeted students.

Variables affecting student outcomes

Previous attendance and courses passed--which represent not students' characteristics alone, but also their prior school experience--accounted for most of the variance in 1987-88 attendance and courses passed. Being overage for grade and new to high school predicted losses in attendance and courses passed. Results were better for students at each successive grade level, reflecting their greater prior success in school. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students had higher attendance and grades than non-LEP students. This finding, which applied to both Hispanic and non-Hispanic LEP students, suggested that their eligibility for bilingual or ESL classes had been beneficial for them, though the evaluation did not have a way of confirming their enrollment in these classes.

Student outcomes associated with different DPI sponsored services or activities varied widely from one school to another, reflecting differences in the students served, how the activity was carried out, coordination of the activity with other activities or services, and the general contexts of the schools. Instructional enrichment, student affiliation activities, and a part-time jobs program had the most consistent positive effects on attendance and courses passed after prior-year performance was accounted for, but these activities tended to be used with students who were less at risk. Students more at risk were concentrated more in special academic programs, with highly variable results.

Student outcomes varied between schools, with one school meeting the goal for attendance improvement and two schools meeting the courses passed improvement goal. In one of the latter two schools, an exceptionally high number of targeted students were awarded a New York State Equivalency Diploma.

Overall, students served by a combination of school and CBO staff had less negative outcomes than students served by school or by CBO staff alone. Operation Success was involved in the schools with the most positive outcomes, but was also involved in schools with highly negative outcomes.

School-wide context variables and outcomes

Attendance decreased slightly or substantially in most of the schools. About half of the schools had decreased percents of students discharged as dropouts and about half had increased percents of dropouts. The number of long-term absentees (LTAs) on the school registers increased somewhat more in the schools with greater attendance loss and reduced rate of discharging students as dropouts.

The conflict mediation program operated by Victim Services Agency continued to contribute to reduced levels of suspension of students for aggression against other students in the schools in which it was implemented.

The DPI produced many innovations, for example, the PM School. At the same time, the environments of virtually all of the schools limited the results that could be obtained by a special program within the schools. The size of the high schools and the numbers of students for whom, almost by definition, conventional schooling was not working seemed to foster a culture of conflict, alienation, and failure in the schools. House plans were just beginning to be implemented in the high schools in 1987-88. The schools varied in leadership, faculty attitude toward the program and its students, and program staff resourcefulness and stability. The dropout prevention effect was found to be gathering strength in several schools, but appered to have peaked or stalled in other schools.

Program cost

Total expenditures for the high school portion of the dropout

Prevention Initiative in Year Three were $7,541,632. CBO expenditures totaled $3,775,192, representing 50% of total expenditures. Total expenditures for each of the thirteen schools ranged from $407,774 to $834,718. Average per-pupil costs ranged from $1,022 to $3,002. Due to differing sizes of the program rosters, there was little relationship between total costs and per-pupil costs; however, per-pupil costs were much higher in schools where CBOs served many fewer students than they budgeted for. There was no relationship between total program costs and program outcomes (average changes in attendance, courses passed, or percent of dropouts). In the absence of overall student gains, it is not possible to carry out a valid cost-effectiveness analysis. However, the DPI should also be viewed as having implemented processes of school improvement that might benefit future cohorts of students if the Board of Education builds upon what has been learned in the dropout prevention effort so far.

Recommendations

The evaluation has concluded that the goals for student improvement need to figure much more centrally in the planning of services, short-term monitoring of results of program actions, and long-term accountability of principals and school and CBO staffs. At the same time, student improvement must be brought about through school improvement. School-based planning is essential for this process. Houses and alternative schools need to be small enough to promote a sense of community, but even small subschools should have students and staff with diverse interests and aptitudes. The academic program for many students might need to include a combination of experience-based courses and preparation for GED programs and examinations. Academic, counseling, and attendance outreach and health referral functions must be coordinated through both a strong advisory system and a comprehensive and flexible student information system. All high school students seventeen years of age or older who want to work for pay should be assisted in finding and maintaining part-time employment and be provided with appropriate academic and workplace supports. A dropout prevention program needs to begin in the early grades but to be followed by continuous supports for students throughout their middle school and high school years.

Evaluation of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative

Joseph Grannis, Project Director
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Final Report on the High Schools for Year Three, 1987-88

Detailed Summary

The Teachers College evaluation of the New York City Dropout Prevention Program (DPI) is the most extensive study of a large-city dropout prevention program to date. It combines a comprehensive statistical analysis of student characteristics, program services, and student outcomes, with in-depth studies of the program and students at selected sites. The information assembled by the evaluation furnishes profiles of the program and the students that would need to figure in future planning, and it raises fundamental questions about the scale and process of change that would be required to reduce the dropout rate in the New York City schools substantially.

Teachers College's evaluation of the 1987-88 DPI middle school program has already been published. (Grannis, J. C., Riehl, C. R., et al. Evaluation of the New York City Dropout Prevention Initiative: Final Report on the Middle Schools for Year Three, 1987-88. New York: Institute for Urban and Minority Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1989.) The DPI was implemented in 29 middle schools which were feeders to ten of the thirteen high schools. Overall, the middle school program did not have a significant impact on targeted students' attendance and achievement, although individual schools were identified where the program did make a positive difference to students' performance. Student outcomes in middle schools that utilized CBOs were essentially the same as the outcomes in schools which utilized Board of Education staff only, while the per-student cost of the program in the CBO schools was about twice the cost of the program in the schools without CBOs. High school linkage was one of the least implemented of the middle school program components.

High School DPI Program Implementation

The Dropout Prevention Initiative was established in 1985 by the New York City Board of Education, the City's Office of Management and Budget, and the Mayor's Office of Youth Services, with about $30 million in special city funding for the first three years of program operation. The Initiative was organized with both a high school and a middle school component. As in the previous two years, thirteen high schools participated in the Initiative during 1987-88 -- ten schools from the Dropout Prevention Program (DPP) and three from the Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention (AIDP) Program. One special feature of the Initiative was that community-based organizations (CBOs) collaborated with schools to provide dropout prevention services. Nine different community-based organizations were involved in the high school Dropout Prevention Initiative during 1987-88.

The DPI combined seven main components of services to students: program facilitation, attendance outreach, guidance and counseling, health services, school-level linkages, alternative educational programs, and, in the DPP schools, school security. Three program models for the delivery of services were implemented during Year Three: a modified systemic model, with the bulk of funding used for school-wide improvements and some funds for CBO-sponsored services (6 DPP schools); a modified CBO model, with the bulk of funding used for the CBO-sponsored Operation Success program and a moderate amount of funding for school-wide improvements (4 DPP schools); and an AIDP school-with-CBO model, with most funding used for Operation Success, but with substantial participation by tax-levy school staff (three AIDP schools). Operation Success was conducted by Federation Employment and Guidance Service (FEGS).

A total of 4781 students were identified by school and CBO personnel as having been part of the Dropout Prevention Initiative in 1987-88. The ten DPP schools listed a total of 3493 students on their program rosters, and the three AIDP schools listed 1318 students. The 31,713 other students enrolled in the 10 DPP schools which implemented schoolwide improvements were also potentially affected by the program, in greater or lesser degree.

From the program rosters, Teachers College selected a random sample of approximately 150 students per school as an "evaluation sample." Extensive data were obtained on this sample, and most of the analyses presented in this report are for the evaluation sample. A total of 1885 students were included in the evaluation sample, 1435 from the ten DPP schools and 450 from the three AIDP schools.

Students were enrolled in the Dropout Prevention Initiative on the basis of satisfying at least one of several eligibility criteria; reasons for program enrollment were analyzed for evaluation sample students in the ten DPP schools. Over forty percent of the DPP students met the criteria of 40 or more absences the prior year; forty-six percent of the students had had 20 or more absences the prior spring. Almost forty percent were listed as having failed three or more courses the prior year due to excessive cutting. Thirty percent of the students were listed as having failed three or more courses due to excessive cutting *and* having had either 40+ prior year or 20+ prior term absences.

Student Background Characteristics

The characteristics of the students targeted for the program followed the profiles of students for whom the high schools are not working. Many students are stuck in the ninth and tenth grades, are becoming increasingly overage for grade, and are experiencing mounting failure.

The 1885 evaluation sample students were almost evenly divided by gender (51.1% male; 48.9% female).

Over three-quarters (77%) of the targeted high school students were in the ninth or tenth grades. Special education students were somewhat under-represented among the DPI target population; just over 6% of the students were reported to be in special education.

A total of 16% of the students were new to the high school (or "incoming students") in 1987-88, including 23% of the ninth graders and 14% of the tenth graders.

Over sixty percent of the program students had not been promoted to a higher grade at the end of the 1986-87 school year. Eighty percent of the ninth graders in the program during 1987-88 were repeating the ninth grade, and fifty-one percent of the tenth graders were repeating tenth grade.

Almost eight percent of the 1885 students in the evaluation sample were older than 18 -- beyond the expected age of high school completion. Eighty-five percent of the evaluation sample students were at least one year older than the expected age for their grade level, and 58% of the students were at least two years overage for grade. This was most pronounced for ninth graders, where 66 percent were 2 or more years overage.

Just under eleven percent of the students in the evaluation sample were identified as "limited-English proficient," on the basis of having scored below the twenty-first percentile on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) or being coded as limited-English proficient on the Board of Education's central data files. Limited-English proficient students were somewhat underrepresented in the program sample.

An additional five percent of the students could be considered "marginally English proficient," by virtue of having scored between the twentieth and fortieth percentiles on the LAB or having taken a standardized achievement test in an alternate language within the previous two years. It is likely that many more high school students have marginal English proficiency than can be identified from current Board of Education data.

Overall, high school students in the Dropout Prevention Initiative had low rates of attendance during the prior school year (1986-87). The average proportion of prior year days present was 69%, the equivalent of 124 days present and 56 days absent.

The overall average proportion of courses passed by evaluation sample students during 1986-87 (the prior year) was 44%. Over two-thirds of the students had failed more than 40% of their prior year courses. A small proportion (10%) of the students passed all of their courses the previous year.

Ninth graders had passed, on average, only 31% of their prior year courses. Incoming ninth graders (i.e., students new to the high school in 1987-88) had passed an average of 62% of their prior year courses. Repeat ninth graders had passed only 25% percent of their prior year courses.

Difference in student background characteristics across the thirteen schools indicate that the thirteen schools were targeting services to very different cohorts of students. For example, average prior year attendance rates for program students in the different schools ranged from 58% to 78%. The average rate of prior year courses passed by targeted students was quite low in all schools, ranging from just 31% in one school to 56% in another.

Student Participation in Activities

Program coordinators and CBO site supervisors were asked to list the activities in which evaluation sample students had participated. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of the students received individual and/or group guidance. Thirty-eight percent (38%) participated in a special academic program and 32% received some form of instructional enrichment; when these categories are combined, 59% received some form of alternative education. Eight percent of the evaluation sample students participated in a jobs program, and 20% participated in an affiliation activity, i. e., an activity which promoted increased connection to the school. The range in figures among the different schools shows the considerable variations in program implementation at the thirteen school sites.

Female students were slightly more likely to have received both individual and group guidance and to have participated in an affiliation activity, but were less likely to be enrolled in an academic program. Both marginally-English proficient and English proficient students were much more likely to receive individual and group guidance than were limited-English proficient students. The former two groups were also more likely to participate in an academic program than were the LEP students, possibly because LEP students were already enrolled in special classes.

Students one or two years overage for grade level were more likely to receive individual and group guidance than were students not overage for grade. All categories of overage students were more likely to participate in academic programs through the Dropout Prevention Initiative. Participation in affiliation activities declined dramatically as students became more overage.

Students new to the high school were somewhat more likely to receive individual guidance services and affiliation activities, but overall the mix of services to incoming versus previous high school students was quite similar.

Students who had failed their grade level in 1986-87 were twice as likely to receive an academic program service, and less than half as likely to participate in an affiliation activity, during 1987-88.

Individual and group guidance were the most frequently recorded services sponsored by community-based organizations; over half of the CBO students received individual guidance, and 37% received group guidance. The next most frequent activity was career education/job training: nearly 8% of the CBO students overall participated in a job-related activity.

Students received only a fraction of the kinds of services which the program rationale and the Chancellor's regulations implied should be packaged together.

A weekly log of services that the evaluation had on-line program staff maintain for a sample of 200 students in five high schools showed that 20% received from DPI staff four or more of the seven general categories of services, 33% of the students received services in three, 32% received two categories of services, and 15% received services in only one or none of the seven categories. The log undoubtedly underestimated services received in some categories, but still validly gives a picture of far less than comprehensive services for many students.

Reasons for students receiving scattered services include both the "loose coupling" of units that characterizes the typical large high school organization and the political necessity of spreading services over large numbers of students in order to justify program budget. Some students might have been assumed to have required fewer services. A further reason appeared to be that the several Board of Education offices involved held the programs in the schools more accountable for implementing discrete services than for the student attendance and courses passed outcomes that might result from, and require, combining services to provide comprehensive support for individual students.

Some program units did appear to have integrated services more fully and to have begun to achieve commensurate outcomes.

For example, school and CBO staff in one school integrated attendance outreach with their other services to students in ways that contributed to general attendance gains in the school.

A CBO provided attendance outreach and guidance and counseling to students in a teacher-developed mini-school that had better outcomes for students than other, less well-integrated program activities in the host school.

DPI staff in a third school developed a career-oriented program that included classes for their targeted students in a nearby vocational school, and they coordinated attendance outreach and counseling with this program. Targeted students in this school had the best combined attendance and courses passed outcomes of all the schools, while comparable students in the same school who were not targeted had disastrous outcomes.

Program components

Engaging high school linkage and orientation activities were identified in some schools but were experienced by relatively few incoming students, especially few of those that needed them the most. A study of the transition of students into four of the DPI high schools from 11 DPI middle schools designated as their "feeders" found that about a third of the targeted students who were in their terminal year in the middle schools in 1986-87 were enrolled in the linked high schools in 1987-88, but that in turn less than a third of these enrollees (or less than a tenth of the original middle school targeted group) were targeted for services in the high school.

Coordination between the dropout prevention program and the attendance office was not formalized in most schools, including even the school with the strongest attendance gain. Student information systems were especially underdeveloped. A great deal of attendance outreach time was devoted to resolving list-notice cases in the fall and clarifying LTA cases throughout the year, thus reducing the time for attendance outreach to more active students.

Counseling was the service reported most frequently for targeted students. Individual counseling was the most common counseling activity reported in all of the schools, but while group counseling was second in two of the logged schools, the second most frequent counseling activity in three of the schools was attendance outreach. Counseling staff were extensively involved in crisis intervention. Many counselors were perceived as having case loads and paperwork that were too heavy for them to be effective.

Program staff saw the students as having extraordinary health needs. Extensive health services were available to students in two of the 13 schools, which had foundation grants for this. Special services related to pregnancy prevention, parenting, drugs, and general health promotion were available in several schools; otherwise, services were limited or very inadequate for the health needs of students in the schools.

Project SMART's conflict resolution program (implemented by the Victim Services Agency) continued to contribute to lower rates of suspensions of students for aggressions against other students, while school security staff were widely criticized by program staff and students for arbitrary and confrontational approaches to security problems.

Health and school security were not primary responsibilities of the DPI, but they were appropriately identified as elements of the school situation that had to be improved if the goals of the DPI were to be realized.

The DPI experimented with a variety of alternative education arrangements.

The PM School in the school which originated the concept was a major departure from conventional school practices in various ways, including students being allowed to select their after-school courses in face-to-face registration with the teachers. Targeted students who used this PM School were decidedly less at risk than those who did not, but a substantial fraction of the students electing it were holdovers, as intended. Other schools in 1987-88 were still trying to resolve issues related to the implementation of a PM School.

The curriculum of some alternative education programs was experiential or work oriented. Individualizing students' schoolwork was a way that some more academic courses were adapted to students' different ability levels and attendance patterns. Some alternative education programs only diluted course content and requirements. From a "hidden curriculum" point of view, one transitional class that was observed in depth was extensively engaged in dealing with conflict in the school, which incoming students interviewed from several schools confirmed was also salient in their high school experience.

Programming targeted students together in their classes had both positive and negative potentials. A family or community atmosphere was strongly appreciated by students from several mini-school programs who were interviewed in the spring, and who were at this point in time successful or at least survivors in the programs. However, blocked programming was especially associated with low attendance in 1987-88, which probably reflected not only the prior attendance behavior of the students but also the generally low holding power of the programs. Programming low achieving students together facilitates identifying them for services but also runs the risk of low expectations and morale associated with homogeneous grouping.

A part-time jobs program was perceived by participating students as having a positive impact on or at least not competing with their academic motivation. Males were more likely than females to say that they would have attended school less if there had not been a jobs program, particularly reflecting a greater need they perceived to earn money for family as well as for self. While students were generally satisfied with their jobs, the major reason given for dissatisfaction was that a job was not challenging enough. Students in the jobs program had relatively high attendance and courses passed outcomes. However, even these students were passing only about half of their courses and few received special academic supports.

CBO involvement

The high schools in which the DPI was implemented varied in the extent to which they relied more on school or CBO staff to carry out the program, and varied also in whether they concentrated more on specifically targeted students or took a more general, systemic approach to dropout prevention. Since the same schools that were designated to use a case-management approach were the ones in which most of the funding went to CBOs, the design of the DPI could not sustain an analysis of whether case managment was more effectively carried out by school or CBO staff.

All of the high schools had at least some CBO involvement. CBOs played a significant part in each of the examples of more integrated services cited on page 5 above. The schools with the strongest overall gains in student attendance and/or courses passed were all located in the modified CBO model and the AIDP school-with-CBO model, both of which involved Operation Success (OS). These same models, however, also contained schools in which students had substantial losses in attendance or courses passed. The effectiveness of CBOs, as of virtually all DPI activities, varied as a function of the students they were serving, the school context in which they operated, and their own organization, including site management and staff stability or turnover.

General school environment

The DPI produced many innovations, for example, the PM School and the part-time jobs program. At the same time, the environments of virtually all of the schools limited the results that could be obtained by a special program within the schools. The schools varied in leadership, faculty attitude toward the program and its students, and program staff resourcefulness and stability. The size of the high schools and the numbers of students for whom, almost by definition, conventional schooling was not working seemed to foster a culture of conflict, alienation, and failure in the schools. House plans were just beginning to be implemented in the high schools in 1987-88.

There were various indications that in 1987-88 the DPI was at the center of larger changes in some schools, developments that might be expected to produce gains over a longer period of time than the evaluation encompasses. On the other hand, the program was observed to have peaked in an earlier year, or to have stalled, in some other schools in the DPI. In either event, the more long-range trajectory of the program in each school has to be considered. The program models initially presumed that systemic changes would take place more in the systemic or modified systemic high schools, but at least one modified CBO high school had began to change systemically by 1987-88. High levels of activity, support, and shared decision-making by administrators, especially the school principal, were observed to be essential for a DPI team, including the CBO, to become empowered in a school.

Program Outcomes

Most of the program outcomes are reported for the evaluation sample of 1885 students who were chosen randomly from the full rosters of 4781 targeted students in the thirteen DPI high schools. Data are more complete for the evaluation sample.

For the DPI overall, 39% of targeted high school students improved their attendance in 1987-88 over 1986-87. This was substantially below the Chancellor's goal of 50% of targeted students improving their attendance. Most of the schools varied in a narrow range between 32% and 42% improvement, but in one school the proportion improving was 60%, in another it was 46%, and in still another it was only 26%.

The average attendance change for targeted students in the high schools was -6%, the equivalent of a decline in attendance of about 11 days. Average attendance fell from 69% in 1986-87 to 64% in 1987-88. (The change score is based on students for whom data are available for both years, and therefore does not necessarily equal the difference between the rates for the two years separately.)

Of those students who had failed at least one course in 1986-87, 42% passed a higher proportion of courses in 1987-88. Again this was below the Chancellor's goal of 50%. The average change for the gaining students was +28%, or about three courses per year. Of all targeted students in the evaluation sample, 36% passed more courses in 1987-88 than in 1986-87, 49% passed fewer, and 15% passed the same.

The proportion of students with prior failures who improved in courses passed in 1987-88 varied in individual schools between a low of 25% and a high of 63%.

The average change in proportion of courses passed was -4%, the equivalent of failing about one half of a course more per year. The average proportion of courses passed in 1986-87 was 44% and the average for 1987-88 was 42%.

The average number of credits earned by targeted students was 4.7, or somewhat less than half the average number that would be needed to be earned in one year for promotion to the next grade. Credits earned varied between 2.7 in one school and 6.2 in another, reflecting both the characteristics of students enrolled in the program and the program strategies in different schools.

Only 18% of the targeted students earned 10 or more credits in 1987-88. However, as many as 41% of the students may have been promoted, including some who graduated, at the end of the 1987-88 school year. The 41% figure reflects the fact that many students were holdovers and needed fewer than 10 credits to be promoted, but it is also likely to be exaggerated by late reporting of promotions from the year before. Both figures need to be considered to get a valid picture of the promotion rate.

Out of the total program population of 4811 students, 125 earned New York State Equivalency Diplomas (GEDs). Fully half of the GEDs were earned by students in the one school which had its own New York State approved GED program.

Subsamples of the targeted students who were eligible for DPI services on the basis of 1986-87 attendance have been compared with samples of similarly eligible students who were not targeted in the DPI or the AIDP. Attendance changes were somewhat less negative in the program samples than in the comparison samples. Likewise, courses passed changes were somewhat less negative than in the comparison samples. In two of the three schools in the AIDP school-with-CBO model, results for program students were decidedly better than results for comparison students.

Attendance-eligible DPI targeted students gained more credits than comparable not targeted students in the same schools, in grade nine, grade ten, and special education, but not in grade eleven and grade twelve.

At every grade level, attendance-eligible targeted students were discharged as dropouts at a somewhat lower rate than comparable not-targeted students. Overall, 24% of the attendance-eligible DPI students were discharged as dropouts, compared to 34% of the attendance-eligible students who were in the DPI schools but not targeted, and 31% of attendance-eligible students who were in the remaining AIDP schools but not targeted. The differences in rate between the targeted and the comparison students were not as large as they had been in Year Two, 1986-87, mostly reflecting the fact that dropout discharge rates had gone down some for not-targeted students in most of the schools.

Attendance change was somewhat more negative for students who were served by school staff only (-8%) or not served at all (-8%), and less negative for students served by a CBO only (-5%) or a combination of school and CBO (-6%). These results varied by model and school.

Courses passed change was most negative for students who were served by a CBO only (-8%), less negative if served by a school only (-5%) or neither school nor CBO (-5%), and least negative if served by a combination of school and CBO (-2%).

In the modified CBO and the AIDP school-with-CBO models, results were somewhat better in the schools which listed students for more services. Across all of the models, there was a trend for more favorable changes if students received more, rather than fewer, services. Since students who received more services tended to have had lower prior year attendance and courses passed outcomes, some of their gains may represent regression to the mean.

Results for a given activity, for example mini-school or off-campus enrichment, varied widely from one school to another, reflecting differences in the students served, how the activity was carried out, coordination of the activity with other activities or services, and the general contexts of the schools.

In the DPP, the number of credits students earned and whether students had gains or losses in percent of courses passed varied fairly independently of each other. Instructional enrichment and the part-time jobs program were the basic types of activity that were most associated both with smaller losses in percent of courses passed and larger average number of credits gained. However, students who were relatively less at risk were found disproportionately in these activities and in student affiliation, while students who were relatively highly at risk on the basis of prior performance were concentrated in special academic programs and, to a lesser extent, in individual and group counseling.

In the AIDP, students both earned more credits and had better courses passed changes if they participated in four basic types of activity: special academic program, instructional enrichment, ongoing individual counseling, and part-time jobs program. Differences between the students participating or not in a given type of activity were not as pronounced in the AIDP schools.

Instructional enrichment included the OS career education and job training program. Students in this program in DPP schools had an average loss of attendance (-5%) and a modest gain in courses passed (+4%), but earned a lower than average number of credits during the year (3.3). Students in career education and job training in the AIDP schools had a lower than average loss in attendance (-1%), a substantial gain in courses passed (+17%), and a higher than average number of credits earned during the year (5.8).

There were a number of situations in which students improved their rate of passing courses at the same time that their attendance declined. In the school in which students had the strongest gain in courses passed, they also had one of the largest losses in attendance; at the same time, not-targeted students in this school had massive losses in attendance. The attendance of the students seemed to be signaling the need for strengthening the holding power of the school environment as a whole, rather than just a weakness of the program activities as such.

The school with the strongest combined attendance and courses passed results, also in the AIDP, had a vocational and career-oriented curriculum for targeted students.

Program cost

Total expenditures for the high school portion of the Dropout Prevention Initiative in Year Three were $7,541,632. CBO expenditures totaled $3,775,192, representing 50% of total expenditures. The largest CBO allocation was $2,658,190 to Federation Employment and Guidance Service for the seven Operation Success programs. Total expenditures for each of the thirteen schools ranged from $407,774 to $834,718. Schools made quite different decisions about how to spend the funds allocated to school budgets. Average per-pupil costs ranged from $1,022 to $3,002. Due to differing sizes of the program rosters, there was little relationship between total costs and per-pupil costs; however, per-pupil costs were much higher in schools where CBOs served many fewer students than they budgeted for. Some of this discrepancy may be explained by CBOs serving students who were not listed on the program rosters.

There was no relationship between total program costs and program outcomes (average changes in attendance, courses passed, or percent of dropouts). In the absence of overall student gains, it is not possible to carry out a valid cost-effectiveness analysis. However, the DPI should also be viewed as having implemented processes of school improvement--dropout prevention planning teams, the collection of data on students at risk, the creation of alternatives like PM Schools, collaboration with CBOs--that might benefit future cohorts of students if the Board of Education builds upon what has been learned in the dropout prevention effort so far.

Recommendations

While 1987-88 was anticipated as the first year in which there would be substantial gains in student outcomes for the DPI, the program did continue in 1988-89 and, with modifications, is still in effect in the current school year. A memorandum on the Dropout Prevention Program for 1989-90 from the Executive Director of the Division of High Schools to high school principals in June 1989 incorporated many of the recommendations that Teachers College made in a preliminary report and that are contained in the present report.

Nonetheless, the extent of the change that is necessary cannot be overemphasized and is reiterated in this final report.

The evaluation's recommendations include the following:

1. Goals for student improvement need to figure much more centrally in the planning of services, short-term monitoring of results of program actions, and long-term accountability of principals and school and CBO staffs. School-based planning is essential for this process.

2. Houses or alternative schools need to be created for all students. These units should be small enough to promote a sense of community, but students and staff even of small subschools should have diverse interests and aptitudes.

3. Academic, counseling, and attendance outreach and health referral functions need to be coordinated through both a strong and personal advisory system and a comprehensive and flexible student information system.

4. In order to facilitate school-based planning and services to individual students, information systems to profile data on students and programs need to be developed in each school. The Board of Education should facilitate the exchange of information between schools and should furnish sufficient computer equipment, programs, and training for these purposes to each school.

5. The academic program for many students should include a combination of experience-based courses and preparation for GED programs and examinations.

6. Adults from many spheres of work and life should be involved as mentors, tutors, and coaches for high school youths. All high school students seventeen years of age or older who want to work for pay should be assisted in finding and maintaining part-time employment and be provided with appropriate academic and workplace supports. A greatly enlarged part-time jobs and mentoring program would in turn require expanded collaboration between the schools and a variety of organizations in the public and private sectors.

7. A dropout prevention program needs to begin in the early grades but to be followed by continuous supports for students throughout their middle school and high school years. Radical steps are needed to improve school linkage, including changes in the school calendar to promote transition from middle school to high school.

8. Efforts to involve students positively in the schools in the late summer and early fall need to be increased. Many students are lost while schools and programs are dealing with organizational matters at this time.

9. The responsibility for developing programs for at-risk students should be shared by all of the city's high schools. Schools might work together in partnerships so that schools with greater or fewer

numbers of students at risk could be mutually supportive.

10. All of these recommended developments need to proceed at a pace that is both feasible and challenging for school-based planning units that must manage them first-hand. The role of the central Board of Education is to provide enabling frameworks and fiscal, technical, and professional supports for bringing about these changes.

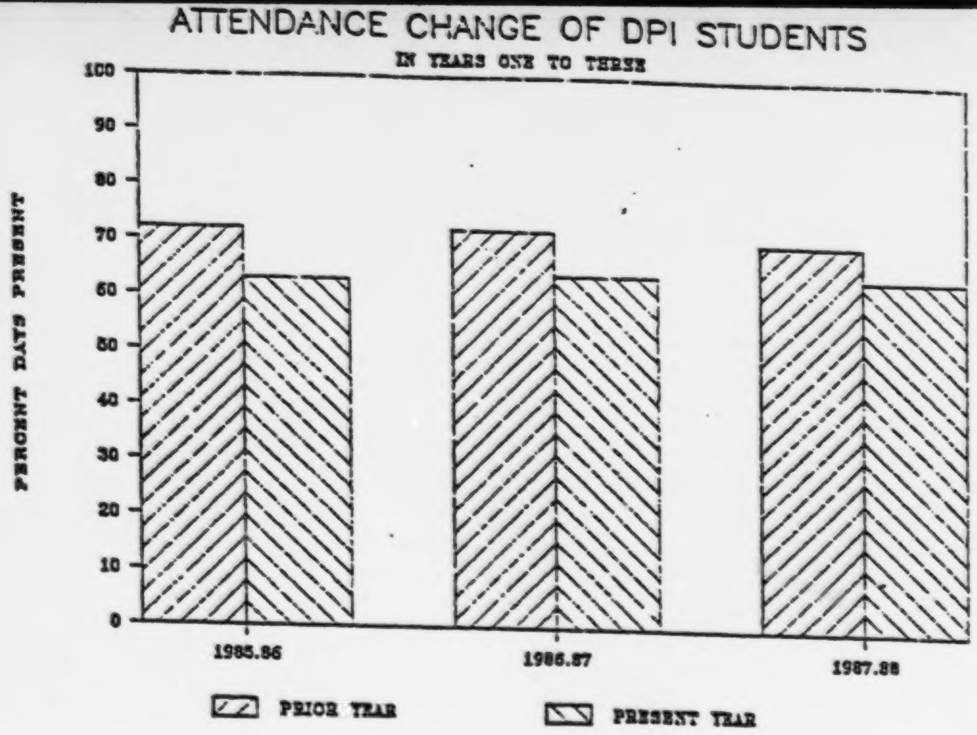


Figure 1

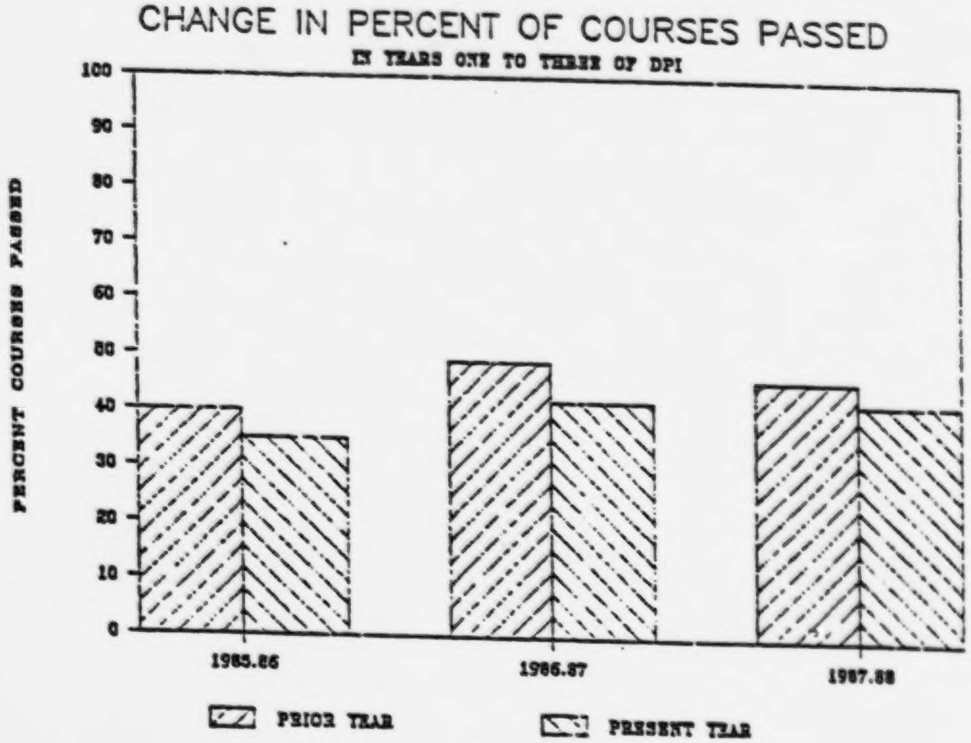


Figure 2

"Present Year" is the average percent for all evaluation sample targeted high school students in the relevant program year for whom data are available for that year; "Prior Year" is an average that is imputed for the prior year by using the change score for those students who have data for both years. For example, students who were in the program in 1985-86 attended school for 63% of days in that year and for 72% of days the prior year. Between the first and third years of the program, attendance outcomes were very similar and courses passed outcomes improved verv slightly.

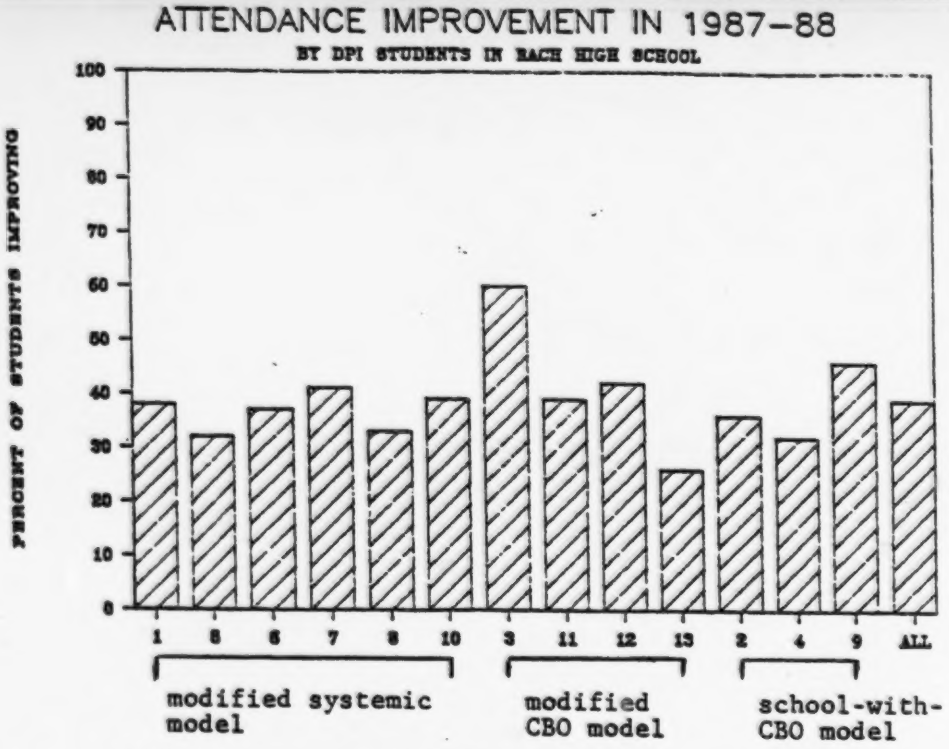


Figure 3

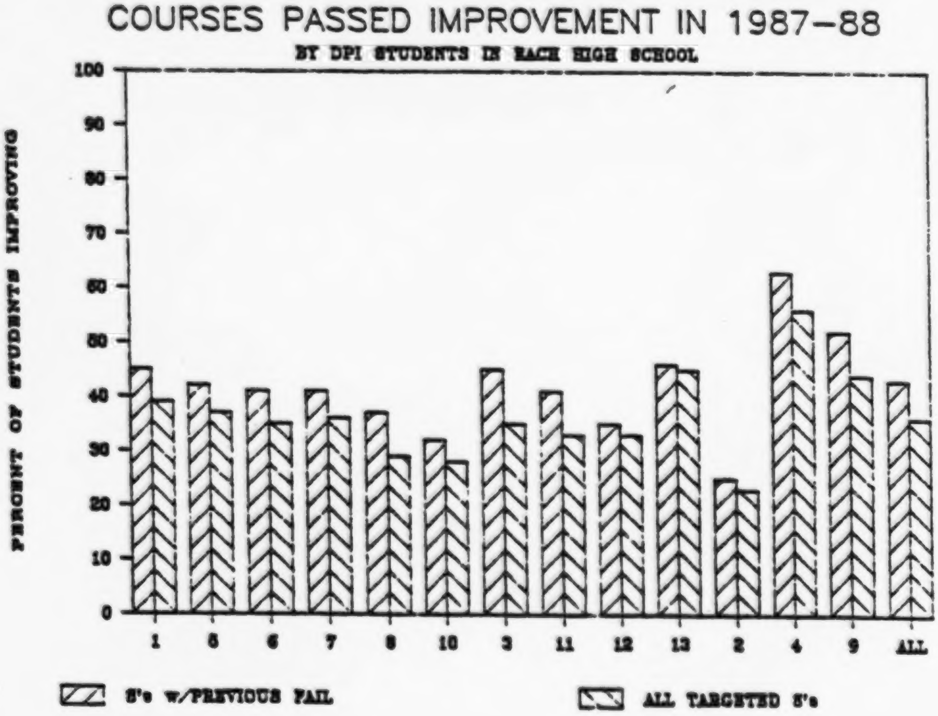


Figure 4

School 3 met the goal of 50% of targeted students improving attendance and Schools 4 and 9 met the goal of 50% of students who had failed a course in the prior year improving their proportion of courses passed. Only School 4 had 50% or more of all targeted students improve in courses passed. Outcomes varied less among schools in the modified systemic model than they did among schools in the modified CBO model and the AIDP school-with-CBO model, both of which involved Operation Success.

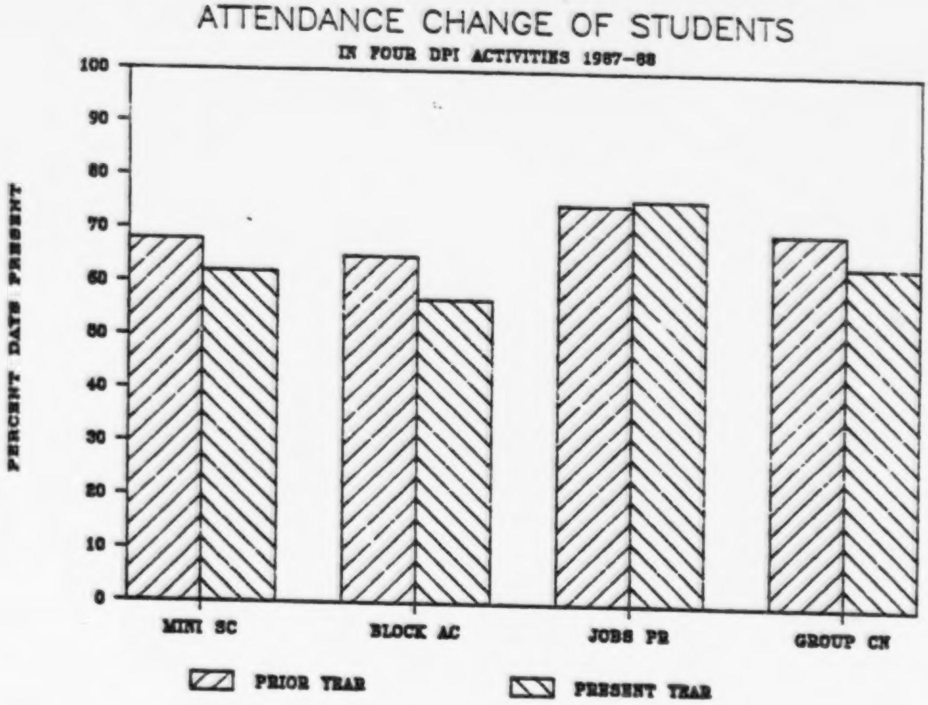


Figure 5

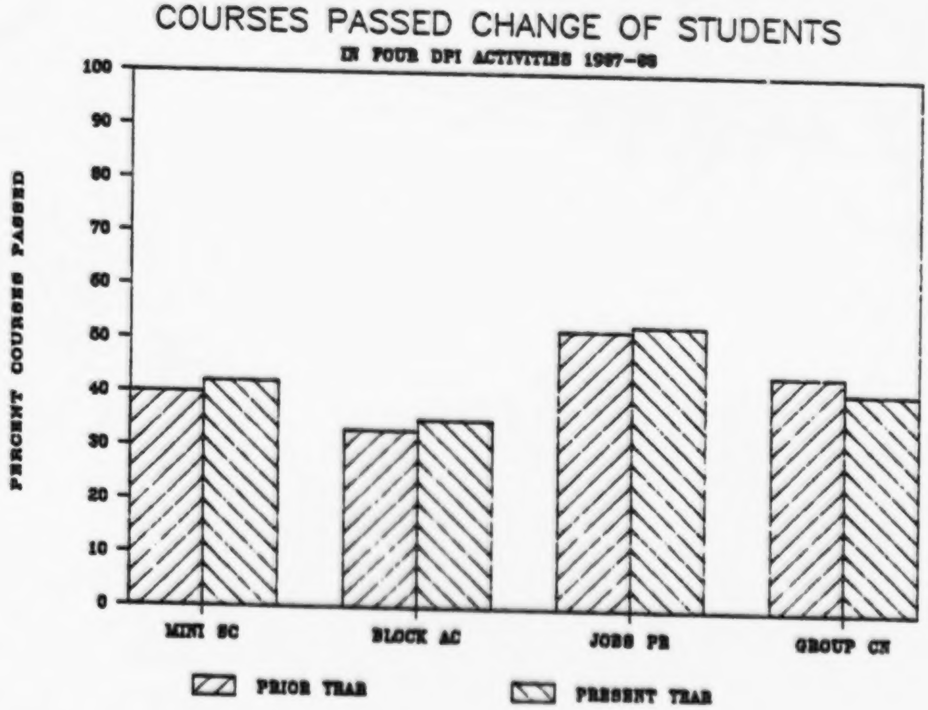


Figure 6

Prior year (1986-87) and present year (1987-88) attendance and courses passed varied for students participating in different activities, for example, mini-school, blocked academic program, part-time jobs program, and group counseling.

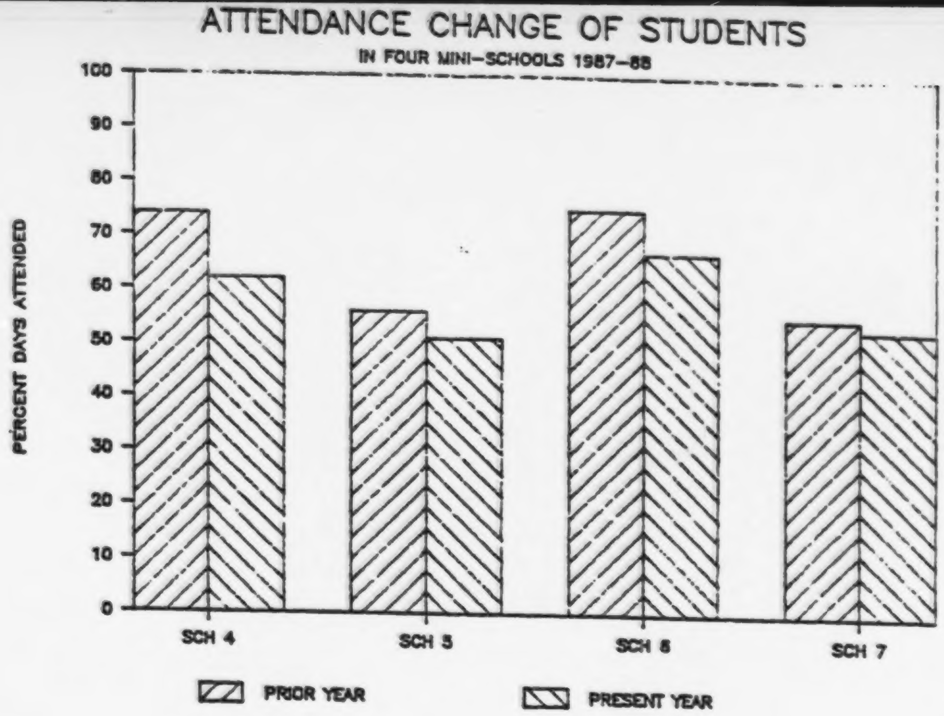


Figure 7

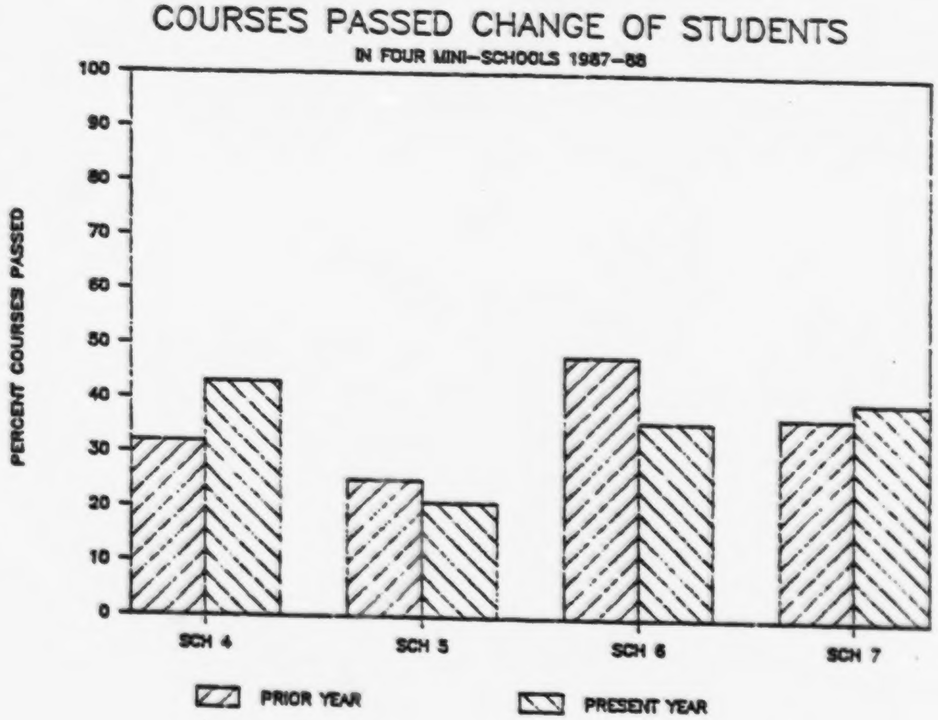


Figure 8

Outcomes for a given activity, in this case mini-school, tended to be different in different schools.

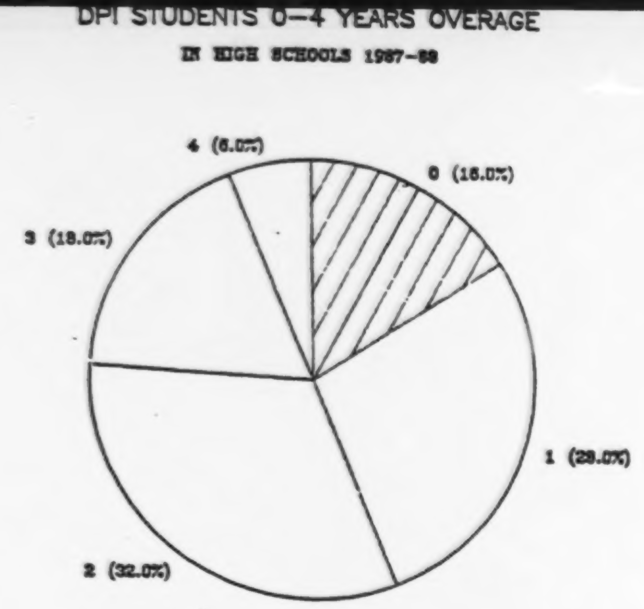


Figure 9

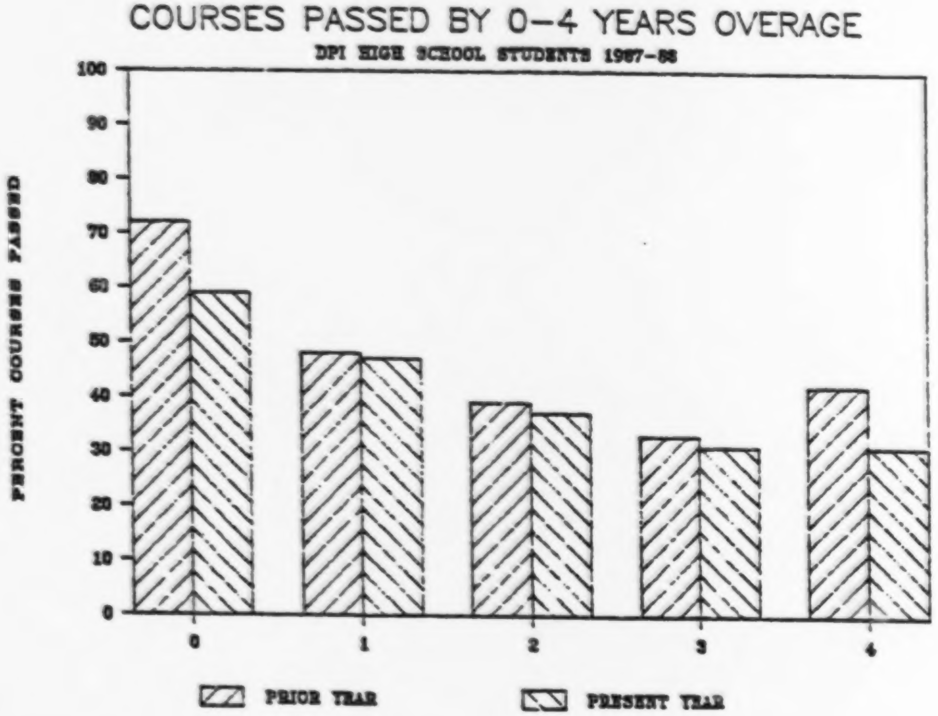
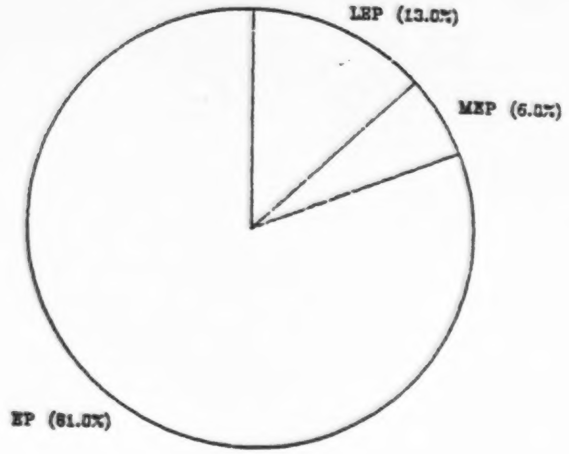


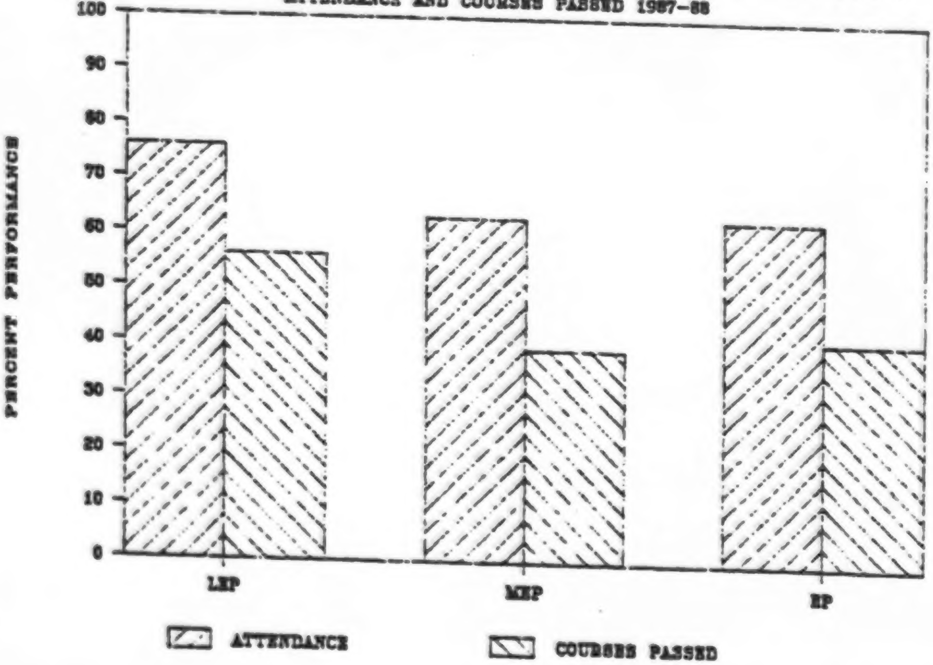
Figure 10

Courses passed rates fell to successively lower levels as students became older for their grade. The greatest losses were incurred by students who were at age for grade, many of whom were entering high school, and students four years overage, for whom high school may have lost all viability.



ENGLISH PROFICIENCY
OF DPI STUDENTS 1987-88

Figure 11



ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF DPI STUDENTS AND
ATTENDANCE AND COURSES PASSED 1987-88

Figure 12

Students with marginal English proficiency (scoring between 21 and 39 on a LAB test, or taking a test in another language) had outcomes more like English proficient students (scoring 40 or above or no test record) than like LEP students (scoring 20 or below on the LAB). The higher attendance as well as courses passed by LEP students suggests that the bilingual or ESL courses they were eligible for engaged them more in school.